The COHESIVE TETRAD

Treatise 1: Logic of Sabda

Human Dignity and Law in the Age of Data

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Treatise 1 of *The Cohesive Tetrad Treatise Series* on the languages of truth.
Grounded in the canonical architecture of ***The Cohesive Tetrad: Jalan Menuju Kebenaran.***

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The Cohesive Tetrad: A Treatise on Human Dignity and Law in the Age of Data

Treatise 1: Logic of Sabda; Human Dignity and Law in the Data Era is the first volume in the SALOQUM Treatises, a sequence of four closely connected treatises on Sabda, Logic, Qualia, and Mistika as four interdependent languages of truth. Together with Treatise 2 on the Language of Logic, Treatise 3 on the Logic of Qualia, and Treatise 4 on the Logic of Mistika, it forms a single architectural body within The Cohesive Tetrad that cannot be separated without distorting the framework. Treatise 5 on Akhlak presents the manifestational layer in which the integrated architecture of Sabda, Logic, Qualia, and Mistika becomes visible in character, virtue, and institutional practice.

Treatise 1 is a collection of four journal articles that systematically elaborate the first pillar in the canonical book The Cohesive Tetrad: Jalan Menuju Kebenaran *(OSF Preprints, DOI: 10.17605/OSF.IO/D5S7V).* Within the canonical hierarchy, The Cohesive Tetrad first establishes the epistemic and ethical architecture of four interdependent pillars, namely Sabda *(Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos)*, Logic, Qualia, and Mistika, with Akhlak as the observable surface of verification. Building on this architecture, the Cohesive Tetrad Treatise Series functions as a layer of conceptual elaboration, while Treatise 1 focuses in depth on the first pillar, Sabda, in its relation to human dignity, law, and truth governance in the age of data abundance. The four articles in Treatise 1 are structured as interlinked analytical units that jointly map the limits, capacities, and failures of pure logic when separated from Sabda and articulate a non-reductive framework of truth governance that is centred on human dignity and relevant for law, public policy, and artificial intelligence.

Journal articles in Treatise 1

The four articles that constitute the corpus of Treatise 1 have the following English titles:

1. Article 1: Sabda, Pure Logic, and the Architecture of Truth Governance: Why Logic Cannot Rule Alone and Why Truth Governance Requires Sabda
2. Article 2: Sabda, Human Dignity, and Telos: Reframing Moral Foundations Beyond Pure Logic
3. Article 3: Sabda, Public Reason, and Plural Societies: The Cohesive Tetrad as an Architecture for Democratic Truth Governance
4. Article 4: Sabda, Logic, and Truth Governance: The Cohesive Tetrad as a Framework for Law and Artificial Intelligence

Canonical source text

All articles in Treatise 1 are grounded in and maintain substantive alignment with a canonical Indonesian manuscript on human dignity and law in the data era within The Cohesive Tetrad framework *(Indonesian title: The Cohesive Tetrad: Traktat tentang Martabat Manusia dan Hukum di Era Data).* This manuscript is a systematic derivation of the canonical book The Cohesive Tetrad: Jalan Menuju Kebenaran (OSF Preprints, DOI: 10.17605/OSF.IO/D5S7V). Together, these canonical layers serve as the primary point of reference for all conceptual elaborations in this treatise and in the broader SALOQUM Treatises.

Canonical and Translation Note

Conceptually, the expression The Cohesive Tetrad refers to an epistemic and ethical architecture structured through four interlocking pillars, namely Sabda (Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos), Logic, Qualia, and Mistika, with Akhlak as the surface of observable verification. The principal canonical representation of this architecture is the book The Cohesive Tetrad: Jalan Menuju Kebenaran *(OSF Preprints, DOI: 10.17605/OSF.IO/D5S7V).* In this book, the structure of the four pillars is formalised and used as the basis for subsequent developments in different formats and levels of detail.

Building on this canonical book, the Cohesive Tetrad Treatise Series is structured into five interrelated treatises, as outlined on the title page of this manuscript. The first four, collectively referred to as the SALOQUM Treatises, develop Sabda, Logic, Qualia, and Mistika as four inseparable languages of truth, while Treatise 5 on Akhlak presents the manifestational layer in which this integrated architecture becomes visible in character, virtue, and institutional practice. Within this series, Treatise 1: Logic of Sabda; Human Dignity and Law in the Data Era develops the first pillar under the conditions of law and truth governance in the age of data by reorganising existing arguments into four focused journal articles.

In situations of doubt, divergence of emphasis, or ambiguity across versions and platforms, the following order of reference applies. First, the canonical book The Cohesive Tetrad: Jalan Menuju Kebenaran *(DOI: 10.17605/OSF.IO/D5S7V).* Second, the Indonesian text of Treatise 1. Third, the canonical document on semantic definitions. Only after these three levels have been consulted should translations and other digital derivatives be used, since they primarily function as instruments of dissemination and accessibility.

All English language components associated with Treatise 1, including titles, descriptions, abstracts, and journal articles, are prepared as faithful translations of the Indonesian texts. The translation process does not introduce new arguments and does not remove existing arguments. Adjustments are limited to linguistic clarity and readability for an international audience. Standardisation of key terms is not introduced directly in this note, but is specified explicitly in the dedicated semantic document:

1. Definisi Semantik Kanonis Sabda, Logika, Qualia, Mistika, dan Akhlak dalam The Cohesive Tetrad (IN)
2. The Cohesive Tetrad Canonical Semantic Definitions: Sabda, Logika, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak (EN)

All translations of the core terms Sabda, Logic, Qualia, Mistika, and Akhlak in Treatise 1 must follow and remain consistent with this canonical semantic definitions manuscript in both Indonesian and English versions.

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This manuscript, *The Cohesive Tetrad: A Treatise on Human Dignity and Law in the Age of Data*, is born as part of an ecosystem of ideas that had already been built beforehand. It is not a free-standing text, not a new experiment, and not a popular summary that stands on its own. This treatise is the direct continuation of the foundational book *The Cohesive Tetrad: Jalan Menuju Kebenaran* and of a series of journal articles that have tested this framework in the arena of international academic debate.

From the outset, the choice of language is not a technical matter. The original version of this treatise is deliberately written in Indonesian, and it is precisely there that its canonical status lies. There are several principled reasons for this. First, The Cohesive Tetrad emerges from intellectual, social, and spiritual struggles rooted in the Indonesian context, both in its experience of law and democracy and in the social wounds that accompany the age of data. Writing in Indonesian allows the nuances of dignity, justice, and trust to be carried in full, not reduced by the limitations of terminology when the text is directly shifted into another language. Second, Indonesian here is not treated merely as a local medium, but as a language worthy of bearing discourse in philosophy, legal theory, and critique of artificial intelligence at the global level. Translations into English and other languages will be secondary and derivative. The canonical and primary text remains this Indonesian manuscript.

The foundational book *The Cohesive Tetrad: Jalan Menuju Kebenaran* performs the basic task. It formulates an architecture of truth that becomes the axis of all subsequent works. Sabda is restored as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos. Logic is placed as the guardian of coherence between definitions, premises, and consequences. Qualia is raised as the horizon of lived and auditable experience. Mistika, the intentional-spiritual dimension of journeying toward direct encounter with the transcendent, explains that every search for truth is always rooted in an inner journey. Akhlak is understood as the surface of character that appears in action. Intention-Trace Alignment, the degree of alignment between epistemic intention and epistemic-moral trace, is introduced as a moral audit tool to examine whether epistemic intentions are truly reflected in the traces left on human beings and the world. The foundational book moves in the terrain of epistemology, ethics, and the crisis of truth, without immediately locking itself into a particular sector such as law or technology.

Once that foundation was laid, the architecture of The Cohesive Tetrad entered the journal arena. There, the framework was tested in rigorous debate: Sabda faced pure logic, the foundations of human dignity were scrutinised through theories of capacities, evolution, and social contract, public reason in plural societies was reread, and truth governance in law and artificial intelligence was analysed with the support of contemporary literature. These journal articles function as laboratories. Each claim of The Cohesive Tetrad was forced to negotiate with Rawls, Habermas, Kittay, Nussbaum, and other modern traditions that have long claimed authority over dignity and justice.

The treatise you are now reading takes the entire corpus as its precondition. It does not repeat the foundational book and does not merely summarise the journal articles. It chooses one cluster of fields that is most strategic for this age, namely human dignity and law in the configuration of the age of data. Under the umbrella of the "age of data" lie artificial intelligence, digital infrastructures, the data economy, ranking algorithms, and the whole set of systems that turn human beings into data points that can be processed, predicted, and governed.

Here, law no longer works alone. Judicial decisions and public policies are increasingly supported, influenced, or even directed by statistical models and artificial intelligence systems.

In that context, this treatise aims to do something very specific and very tightly bound to the architecture of The Cohesive Tetrad. Human dignity is not treated as a constitutional slogan, but as a touchstone for the whole of modern foundations. Law is read as a machine of normative logic that can either save or wound, depending on the normative compass it employs. The age of data is not understood merely as technological progress, but as a new horizon in which algorithmic logic, market logic, and security logic can shrink Sabda and drive out the voices of those who are most vulnerable.

At this point, the six pillars of The Cohesive Tetrad function as an interpretive framework. Sabda, as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, affirms that human dignity is a declaration that must not be negotiated by statistics or procedures. Logic ensures that the reading of Sabda, the formulation of legal norms, and the design of digital systems do not fall into contradiction or manipulation. Qualia raises the experiences of those living under the shadow of law and data systems as legitimate moral knowledge. Mistika, the intentional-spiritual dimension of journeying toward direct encounter with the transcendent, places judges, policymakers, and model designers as spiritual subjects who will one day be held accountable, not merely as technical operators. Akhlak becomes visible in the daily ethos of legal and technological institutions. Intention-Trace Alignment, the degree of alignment between epistemic intention and epistemic-moral trace, forces us to revisit the traces of law in the age of data: whether it truly protects the weak or merely strengthens those who already hold power.

Hierarchically, the position of this treatise is clear. At the summit stands The Cohesive Tetrad as the name of the epistemic and ethical framework. Beneath it, the foundational book *The Cohesive Tetrad: Jalan Menuju Kebenaran* acts as the canonical source that explains the complete architecture. On the next layer, the journal articles function as thematic scalpels that test the resilience of the framework in the arena of academic debate. The treatise *The Cohesive Tetrad: Traktat tentang Martabat Manusia dan Hukum di Era Data* becomes the knot that ties them all together, written in Indonesian as the original version that holds primary textual authority. Any translations that may be produced later will continue to refer to this text as the first reference.

With that awareness, readers are invited to enter this treatise not as a separate intellectual consumption, but as part of a single journey. Each chapter can be traced back to the conceptual foundations of the foundational book and to the struggles within the journal articles. Every sentence stands under the shadow of Sabda and under the demand for the honesty of logic. And every analysis of law in the age of data is intended to answer the same question: in an age that turns human beings into data, do we still dare to place dignity at the centre, and are we still capable of designing law that remains faithful to a truth higher than the algorithm.

Every framework is born from a story; The Cohesive Tetrad only found its shape when Sabda and logic were forced to sit at the same table.

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Problem Statement

The age of data has brought an unprecedented capacity to measure, predict, and optimise human affairs. States, corporations, and global institutions increasingly rely on indicators, models, and algorithms to guide decisions that affect lives at scale. Yet the more logic and data are enthroned as arbiters of rationality, the more fragile human dignity becomes in practice. Those who do not fit the grids of data are rendered invisible. Those who are reduced to numbers are treated as variables rather than as persons. Law finds itself caught in the middle, required to protect dignity while simultaneously absorbing the pressure to defer to data and technical expertise.

In this tension, a deeper question emerges. It is not merely about misinformation, fake news, or technical bias in algorithms. It is about what sits at the centre of truth. Can pure logic, operating on data, provide a sufficient foundation for truth governance in law and public life, or does it need a prior source of norm and telos that cannot be reduced to calculation?

Core Questions

This treatise is driven by a set of core questions that arise from that tension.

1. First, can pure logic serve as a sufficient and legitimate foundation for truth governance in the age of data, or are there structural reasons why it will always fall short when confronted with questions of dignity, justice, and telos?
2. Second, how should Sabda, understood as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, relate to logic within an integrated architecture of truth governance that can guide law, public policy, and artificial intelligence?
3. Third, under what minimal axioms of human dignity can law in the age of data be reconstructed, so that persons are not reduced to data points, and accountability is not dissolved into technical procedures?
4. Fourth, how can The Cohesive Tetrad provide a coherent framework that links the debates on epistemology, political philosophy, legal theory, public ethics, and AI governance without collapsing them into a single discipline?

Aim of the Treatise

This manuscript, *The Cohesive Tetrad: A Treatise on Human Dignity and Law in the Age of Data*, focuses on Treatise 1 on the Logic of Sabda. Its aim is to unfold how Sabda and logic must be ordered if human dignity is to be safeguarded in the age of data. It does not repeat the canonical book *The Cohesive Tetrad: Jalan Menuju Kebenaran*, nor does it merely summarise the four journal articles that constitute the corpus of Treatise 1. Instead, it weaves them into a single argumentative arc that is accessible to readers who encounter The Cohesive Tetrad for the first time through the problem of law and data.

The treatise seeks to show that the crisis of truth in the digital age is not primarily a crisis of information, but a crisis of architecture. Sabda and logic must not be placed as rivals. Logic must be restored to its proper role as guardian of coherence, while Sabda provides the normative horizon that establishes telos and protects dignity.

Contributions and Intended Audience

The contributions of this treatise can be summarised on four levels. At the conceptual level, it reconstructs The Cohesive Tetrad for the domain of human dignity and law, clarifying how Sabda and logic interact within a unified architecture of truth governance in the age of data.

At the normative level, it proposes criteria by which legal systems, public policies, and AI based decision structures can be evaluated in terms of their fidelity to dignity, telos, and accountability.

At the civilizational level, it offers a narrative of the age of data that resists both technocratic triumphalism and nostalgic retreat. The treatise argues that the real battle is not between faith and science, but over who occupies the centre of truth in our shared life.

At the practical level, it provides orientation for scholars, judges, policymakers, AI practitioners, and civil society actors who seek a framework that can guide reflection and action without collapsing into either pure technocracy or arbitrary voluntarism.

The intended audience of this treatise includes philosophers of knowledge and ethics, legal scholars and practitioners, policymakers and public officials, researchers and engineers in artificial intelligence, as well as students and citizens who refuse to accept that dignity must be sacrificed on the altar of efficiency. For all of them, Treatise 1 on the Logic of Sabda is offered as an invitation to think, argue, and act within an architecture where human dignity is not an afterthought, but the central axis around which logic and data must be placed.

Methodological Orientation

This treatise stands within a larger ecosystem of texts in The Cohesive Tetrad. Its primary sources are the canonical book *The Cohesive Tetrad: Jalan Menuju Kebenaran* and four journal articles that constitute the corpus of Treatise 1. The book formulates the architecture of the four pillars and the role of akhlak as the surface of verification. The four articles test and refine that architecture in specific arenas of debate, including epistemology, moral philosophy, public reason, legal theory, and AI ethics.

Methodologically, the treatise employs conceptual reconstruction, normative analysis, and illustrative narratives. Conceptual reconstruction is used to clarify the roles of Sabda and logic and to map their relations to dignity, law, and data. Normative analysis is used to derive criteria for evaluating legal and policy arrangements, especially where human beings risk being reduced to numbers or procedural outputs. Illustrative narratives, such as cases from social assistance programmes, digital platforms, and algorithmic decision systems, are used not as empirical studies in the strict sense, but as lenses that make visible how the architecture of truth operates in concrete situations.

The treatise does not attempt to provide a full doctrinal analysis of specific legal systems, nor a technical manual for algorithm design. Its contribution lies in offering a framework of truth governance that can be appropriated and further developed by specialists in their respective domains. Subsequent sections move from diagnosis of the age of data, through the role of the four journal articles as surgical scalpels, toward a set of twelve theses of Sabda logic and a civilizational epilogue that situates the struggle for dignity within the wider horizon of human history.

Opening

In recent decades, the world has felt increasingly intelligent in technical terms, yet increasingly noisy in its inner life. Cities are filled with sensors, devices have replaced many face-to-face conversations, and almost every important decision now leaves a trail of data that can be processed. Screens that once displayed only text now present risk scores, rankings, and recommendations that appear neutral. Behind those scores and graphs, human lives are compressed into data points that can be sorted, classified, and monetised. Yet at the same time, many people feel that their lives are drifting: there is a sense of fatigue, a sense of being unseen, and a sense of being steered by mechanisms they do not fully understand.

Within this landscape, logic and data slowly ascend to an almost unquestioned throne. In meetings, the phrase "the data show" often closes the debate. In courtrooms, an image of objectivity appears when judgments cite risk scores, recidivism prediction models, or digital records of the defendant's behaviour. In public policy, distribution systems for social assistance are deemed successful when dashboards display high absorption figures, even though the weakest citizens still queue at the same counters. Truth, once discussed through the vocabularies of ethics, theology, and philosophy, is now increasingly narrowed to "what can be statistically demonstrated".

Law stands at the centre of this vortex. On the one hand, law is tasked with protecting human dignity and upholding justice. On the other hand, law is pushed to adopt the logic of efficiency and the logic of data. Judgments must be delivered quickly, caseloads must be managed, and risks must be controlled. For all of this, digital systems, historical databases, and even artificial intelligence models begin to be involved. Law enforcement officers are encouraged to rely on risk scores, algorithmic recommendations, and digital records as materials for consideration. Thus a peculiar situation arises: on paper, law becomes faster and neater, yet in the field, many ordinary people feel it is becoming more difficult to reach justice because their faces have been replaced by statistical patterns.

This treatise is born out of that tension. It begins from a question that is simple yet demands a weighty answer: how can law in the age of data safeguard human dignity if its normative compass is slowly being replaced by risk calculations and procedural efficiency. What happens when a mother loses her rights to land not because of a fair and open hearing, but because her name does not appear in the database. What happens when a young man who grows up in a poor neighbourhood is systematically judged as high risk by a prediction model, so that every legal interaction he has is watched with suspicion. At that point, dignity is no longer the first principle; it becomes a residue of system logic.

Faced with such a reality, the framework of The Cohesive Tetrad offers another way of reading the age. This framework rejects the illusion that pure logic and technical data can serve as the highest source of truth. Sabda is understood as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, a source of authority that declares that every human being possesses a dignity that cannot be negotiated by statistics, markets, or the state. Logic is still valued as the guardian of coherence, but it is no longer allowed to seize the throne. Qualia, the lived experience of those who directly endure legal decisions and the operation of digital systems, is recognised as a legitimate part of the field of truth. Mistika, the intentional-spiritual dimension of journeying toward direct encounter with the transcendent, reminds us that the pursuit of legal truth is not spiritually neutral. Akhlak demands consistency between words, policies, and behaviour. Intention-Trace Alignment, the degree of alignment between epistemic intention and

epistemic-moral trace, forces us to examine whether the noble intentions of the legal system are truly visible in the traces it leaves on human bodies and human lives.

This treatise rests on two foundations that cannot be separated. The first foundation is the foundational book *The Cohesive Tetrad: Jalan Menuju Kebenaran*, which systematically formulates the architecture of Sabda-Logic-Qualia-Mistika-Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment. The second foundation is four journal articles that test this framework in different arenas: the confrontation between Sabda and pure logic, the failure of non-Sabda foundations of dignity, the negotiation of Sabda in the space of public reason, and truth governance at the intersection of law and artificial intelligence. This treatise does not repeat the contents of the foundational book and does not merely summarise those articles. It takes the core of that struggle, weaves it in Indonesian, and focuses it on a single cluster of fields: human dignity and law in the age of data.

For that reason, readers need not regard this treatise as an "academic text" in the narrow sense. It is indeed rooted in the literature of philosophy, legal theory, ethics, and studies of artificial intelligence, yet its form is deliberately kept flowing like a long essay that can be read by judges, policymakers, academics, system engineers, activists, students, and ordinary citizens who are uneasy about the direction of the age. On one side, the arguments are kept sharp and accountable. On the other side, the language is allowed to breathe, giving space to examples, stories, and illustrations that arise from everyday experience.

The main axis of this treatise is the relationship between Sabda and logic in the design and practice of law in the age of data. The questions that will recur in various forms are these: how Sabda restores the position of human dignity when law is implemented with the help of algorithms and large databases; how logic can work honestly without hardening into statistical dogma; how the qualia of those who are most vulnerable can be heard in courtrooms and policy rooms; how Mistika touches the conscience of those who hold authority; how akhlak is reflected in the daily procedures of institutions; and how Intention-Trace Alignment becomes a way of assessing whether the legal system is truly protecting or in fact harming.

The chapters that follow will move from the widest to the increasingly concrete. We begin with the general landscape of the age of data and the ascent of logic to the throne, then retrace the foundations of human dignity, enter the arena of democracy and public reason, descend into the space of law and artificial intelligence, touch on everyday life and the digital sphere, examine the university as a node of truth governance, and finally condense everything into concise theses and a civilisational epilogue. With this sequence, the treatise is expected not only to provide a theoretical framework, but also to change the way readers feel and weigh: when facing legal decisions, the design of digital systems, policies that claim to be data based, and the traces that all of these leave in the lives of those whose voices are the faintest.

The age of data can only be read clearly when we dare to ask not only what is being counted, but who is being wounded by the way we count.

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Section I - The Age of Data, the Throne of Logic, and the Illusion of Neutrality

Imagine a social assistance programme that is heralded as a major breakthrough. The government promises more precisely targeted aid distribution by using an integrated database. Each household is given a score: income, housing status, assets, tax records, and a number of other indicators are mixed into a neat-looking number. From the screens in the central office, poverty appears mapped like the surface of a colourful heat map. On paper, this looks like a victory for rationality.

Yet on the ground, another story unfolds quietly. A mother living in a cramped rented house, without a bank account and without a formal pay slip, discovers that her name does not appear on the list of beneficiaries. There is almost no administrative data about her. On the other hand, there is a family whose economic condition is far better yet is recorded in the database as low income because of a combination of input errors and loose verification. When this mother comes to the counter and asks why she is not registered, the answer she receives is simple: "Your data do not meet the criteria, we are only following the system."

Here we see the face of the age of data. Not because data itself is evil, but because of how we place our trust in it. Data is treated like an honest mirror, whereas what it reflects depends heavily on what was once chosen to be recorded, how the recording was carried out, and who is left outside the frame. When algorithmic logic is given full authority to decide who deserves assistance and who does not, we are in fact handing over the telos of policy to a structure that understands only internal consistency, not the horizon of dignity.

The article *Sabda, Pure Logic, and the Architecture of Truth Governance* has uncovered the roots of this problem from an epistemic angle. It shows that pure logic is never truly pure. Every logical system that operates in the social world always moves within a particular value horizon: what is considered relevant, what is counted, what is ignored, and what may be sacrificed. When logic is positioned as the ultimate source of truth, as if it stands above all values, what in fact happens is the opposite. Logic becomes a loyal servant to the values that have already been quietly placed on stage from the beginning.

The age of data reinforces the illusion that logic can stand on its own. When we say "the data show", we often forget one crucial thing: data is never born from sterile ground. It is born from administrative histories, from power relations, from procedural choices about who is recorded and who is left unseen. Areas that officials rarely visit, informal work that leaves no official trace, groups that feel uncomfortable facing bureaucracy, all of these tend to disappear from the map. When logic is then asked to decide on the basis of this skewed map, the result is injustice that looks neat.

The Cohesive Tetrad reads this situation as a crisis of the architecture of truth, not merely a crisis of information. It is not only because data can be wrong, but because the structure that determines truth and telos has been shifted. Sabda, which ought to be the main compass, Sabda which in The Cohesive Tetrad is understood as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, is slowly pushed back into the private sphere. In the public sphere, the position of the compass is taken over by a combination of technical logic, budgetary targets, and narratives of efficiency. Sabda is still mentioned in pulpits, but is rarely present at meeting tables where policy formulas are drawn up.

It must be emphasised: this treatise is not condemning logic and data. Both are absolutely necessary. Without logic, arguments become chaotic, policies are easily swept away by fleeting emotions, and even the interpretation of Sabda can go astray without the filter of coherence. Without data, we are merely guessing. Yet the problem begins when logic and data are asked to perform tasks that are not theirs, namely to decide on their own what must be considered true, who deserves to be honoured, and where civilisation ought to move.

In The Cohesive Tetrad, logic is placed as the guardian of coherence, not the determiner of telos. It ensures that definitions do not contradict one another, that premises do not betray conclusions, and that arguments do not leap about arbitrarily. It also tests the consistency of proposed interpretations of Sabda, so that Sabda is not turned into a shield to justify interests. Yet logic must not decide on its own what dignity is and for whom policies are to be designed. Decisions of that kind demand Sabda, which speaks of the highest values, qualia, which reveals the lived experience of those affected, Mistika, which calls to mind the deepest intentions, akhlak, which appears in habitual conduct, and Intention-Trace Alignment, the degree of alignment between epistemic intention and epistemic-moral trace, which links the claim of good intention with the concrete traces that are left behind.

The example of the social assistance programme can be reread within the Tetrad framework. Sabda asks: does this policy honour human beings as creatures that have been ennobled, or does it merely reduce the poverty figures in the statistics. Logic examines: are the indicators used to measure poverty consistent and adequately representative of reality, or are they in fact selective. Qualia invites us to hear the voice of the mother who is rejected at the counter, the shame she feels, the sense of not being trusted, the sense of being abandoned. Mistika reminds us that every decision of an official, from the system designer to the frontline officer, is part of his or her spiritual journey toward an encounter with God. Akhlak is visible in the way the officer answers the complaint: is there empathy, openness, and an effort to find a solution, or only the sentence “I am just following the rules”. And Intention-Trace Alignment tests the ministry’s claim that this programme is created “for social justice”: whether after several years those who are weakest live more decently, or are in fact further marginalised.

The age of data is not automatically evil. It offers opportunities to see patterns that were previously hidden. We can map vulnerabilities, monitor the impact of policies, and correct errors with strong evidence. Yet those opportunities will only become reality if data and logic are placed back within the right architecture. Without Sabda at the centre, data tends to submit to the telos set by the market, the state, or the majority. Without qualia, data becomes an abstraction that forgets the pain and relief of actual human beings. Without Mistika, noble intentions in documents easily shift into strategies for maintaining image. Without akhlak, good procedures on paper turn into subtle forms of violence on the ground. Without Intention-Trace Alignment, we become satisfied with slogans and never check the traces.

At this point, we begin to see that the main problem of the age of data is not merely hoaxes or misinformation. Those are surface symptoms. What lies deeper is a shift of authority: who has the right to say “this is true and this is good”. When technical logic, grounded in data, takes over that role while Sabda is pushed into a private corner, civilisation moves on fragile foundations. It appears stable as long as the numbers improve, yet collapses when confronted with questions that statistics cannot answer, such as: why a child who will never be able to stand still possesses full dignity, and why one decision in a meeting room can determine whether that child’s life will be slightly lighter or far heavier.

This section is only an opening. It seeks to shift the view that the problem of truth in the digital age can be solved by information literacy alone. We need something deeper than mere skill in sorting news. We need an architecture that clearly distinguishes between the role of Sabda and the role of logic, between normative authority and technical instruments, between telos and means. In the sections that follow, this architecture will be tested in more specific arenas: human dignity and telos, democracy and public reason, law and artificial intelligence, everyday life, and the university and the ecosystem of knowledge.

Thus, the battle taken up by this treatise is not a superficial battle between faith and science, but a struggle over who sits at the centre of truth governance. The age of data provides many weapons for logic. The question is not whether those weapons should be discarded, but to whom those weapons must submit.

When numbers rise to the throne, human beings are pushed down to the footnotes; it is at that point that dignity begins to disappear from the equation.

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Section II - Four Journal Articles as Four Surgical Scalpels

Before this treatise speaks further, it is important to remember that it does not stand alone. It is born out of a "laboratory" that has been at work for quite some time: the book *The Cohesive Tetrad: Jalan Menuju Kebenaran* and four Sabda journal articles that systematically test Sabda and logic in the hardest theoretical arenas. If the book is the full body that presents the framework, then these four articles are the surgical scalpels that cut through specific layers of the contemporary crisis of truth. This treatise proceeds on the assumption that the work of those scalpels has already been done. Its task now is to stitch those surgical wounds back together into a single body of understanding that can walk in the midst of the wider society.

These four articles operate in four different yet interconnected arenas. The first tests the claim of pure logic as the sole architect of truth governance. The second examines the foundations of human dignity and telos. The third turns to the political stage and public reason. The fourth enters the courtroom and the server room, the point of encounter between law, data, and artificial intelligence. Seen from a distance, the four together form a kind of epistemic cross: one vertical line that draws Sabda down into the domain of logic, and one horizontal line that stretches Sabda-Logic across the domains of dignity, democracy, and technology.

The first scalpel is the article *Sabda, Pure Logic, and the Architecture of Truth Governance: Why Logic Cannot Rule Alone and Why Truth Governance Requires Sabda*. Here the central question is very stark: can pure logic, which operates only with premises and conclusions, be given the mandate to govern truth in total. In many modern traditions, the implicit answer is yes. As long as a claim can be stated rationally, consistently, and free of contradiction, we tend to feel that is enough. This article rejects that feeling of sufficiency. It shows that behind every rational system there is always a value horizon that is not formed by logic, but accepted, assumed, or even smuggled in. The choices about what is taken as a premise, what is called relevant, and what may be sacrificed never arise from logic itself.

This first article traces how modern epistemology shifted authority from Sabda to logic in the name of protecting thinking from dogmatism. Yet along the way, logic slowly turned into a new dogma. The article shatters the illusion that pure logic can determine telos. It reformulates the role of logic as guardian of coherence within a wider architecture: Sabda as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, qualia as guardian of lived experience, Mistika, the intentional-spiritual dimension of journeying toward direct encounter with the transcendent, akhlak as the visible surface of character, and Intention-Trace Alignment, the degree of alignment between epistemic intention and epistemic-moral trace, as the audit mechanism. In other words, the first scalpel cuts through the claim of the supremacy of logic at the foundational level and opens up space for The Cohesive Tetrad as an architecture of truth governance.

The second scalpel is the article *Sabda, Human Dignity, and Telos: Reframing Moral Foundations Beyond Pure Logic*. If the first scalpel operates in the space of epistemology, the second moves into the heart of ethics: from where human dignity derives its foundation, and what telos of life can be accounted for before those who are most vulnerable. Here the article traces three major pathways that have long dominated discourse on dignity: the capacities approach, the evolutionary approach, and the social contract approach. On the theoretical table, all three appear convincing. Human beings are honoured because of their rational capacities, because of their position in the evolutionary process, or because of their role as equal parties in a contract.

But the second scalpel begins its work when these concepts are brought to the bedside of those who are most vulnerable. Children with severe disabilities, elderly people with dementia, undocumented refugees, unrecognised indigenous communities, all become "stress tests" that reveal the weakness of the foundations. This article enters into dialogue with Kittay, Nussbaum, and the traditions of dependency and capabilities theory, acknowledging their advances while also showing that at a certain point they must borrow a language closer to Sabda without naming it. Its main conclusion is firm: foundations of dignity and telos that rest solely on capacities, evolution, or contract cannot guarantee full dignity for those who are most vulnerable without slipping into subtle compromises. Only Sabda, which declares dignity rather than negotiating it, can hold this entire structure. Thus, the second scalpel affirms Sabda as the normative foundation of dignity and telos, while binding it back to The Cohesive Tetrad so that this foundation becomes operational, not mere declaration.

The third scalpel, the article *Sabda, Public Reason, and Plural Societies: The Cohesive Tetrad as an Architecture for Democratic Truth Governance*, moves into the realm of politics and public reason. Here the battlefield is different: how Sabda can be present in a plural democratic space without turning into an instrument of oppression. The traditions of Rawls and Habermas offer models of public reason that, in order to protect procedural justice, tend to push religious reasons into the private sphere. Citizens are allowed to hold Sabda in their hearts, but when they speak in public forums they are asked to translate those reasons into language deemed neutral.

This article shows the paradox that emerges from that recipe. When Sabda is privatised, the public sphere does not become empty. It is immediately filled by other forces: the state, the market, majority opinion, and technocratic discourse. Certain values mount the throne but refuse to acknowledge themselves as a normative horizon. Democracy continues to use the words dignity, justice, and freedom, but these words become vulnerable to distortion because they have lost an anchoring point outside the game of power. The third scalpel proposes a conception of multi-register public reason that allows Sabda to be present as Sabda without killing rational dialogue. Citizens may name Sabda as the deepest source of their commitments, on the condition that those commitments are willing to be tested by logic, compared with the experiences of victims, and read in their traces through Intention-Trace Alignment. Thus, the third scalpel does not invite democracy to retreat into theocracy, but invites democracy to acknowledge that full neutrality toward the transcendent horizon is an illusion.

The fourth scalpel, the article *Sabda, Logic, and Truth Governance: The Cohesive Tetrad for Law and Artificial Intelligence*, takes the final step to the frontline of the age of data. Here positive law and artificial intelligence meet. The context is no longer only theoretical debate, but concrete cases: risk assessment systems in criminal justice, credit scoring algorithms, fraud detection models, and various forms of artificial intelligence that begin to touch fundamental human rights. This article exposes how biased historical data and skewed past policies can be repackaged into risk scores that appear neutral. Judges, prosecutors, and policymakers who rely on these scores feel protected by the "objectivity of the system", whereas what is occurring is the reproduction of injustice in a technical guise.

The fourth scalpel deploys The Cohesive Tetrad as an audit framework. Sabda refuses the reduction of human beings to numbers and affirms that even the guilty still bear a dignity that must not be erased. Logic is asked to be honest about model construction and variable selection. The qualia of those affected - the feeling of being presumed guilty, the sense of losing opportunities, the feeling of being labelled - are seated at the evaluation table. Mistika links

technical decisions to the spiritual history of decision-makers. Akhlak demands the courage to deviate from algorithmic recommendations when a conscience that is submitted to Sabda speaks otherwise. Intention-Trace Alignment then examines the claim of "artificial intelligence for justice": whether the traces left by this system align with the announced intention. In this way, the fourth scalpel shows that Sabda-Logic is not only a way of reading texts or theories, but a framework that can reach into code, servers, and courtrooms.

When these four articles are placed side by side, we see a single consistent pattern. The first scalpel chips away at the supremacy of logic at the epistemic level. The second returns dignity and telos to the lap of Sabda. The third opens space for Sabda in the midst of plural democracy without extinguishing public rationality. The fourth warns that without Sabda-Logic, law and artificial intelligence can turn into machines that harden injustice. Together, they affirm that the crisis of the age of data is not merely a matter of false information, but a matter of the architecture of authority: who has the right to be the highest normative source.

This treatise takes the results of the work of these four scalpels as something already accomplished. It does not repeat all the technical arguments that have been carefully laid out in the journals - those remain the domain of scientific articles that function within the ecosystem. What the treatise does is to move the results of that surgery into a wider space, connecting the fragments of analysis into a narrative that can be followed by readers outside the circle of specialists. For that reason, when in the following sections the names Aisyah, Rafi, students, the mother turned away at the counter, or a university torn between reputation and trust appear, they are all in fact standing on a conceptual floor that has already been poured beforehand through the book and articles of The Cohesive Tetrad.

Thus we can say that the Sabda-Logic treatise is born not as a free composition, but as a distillation and an expansion. Distillation, because it takes the core ideas that repeatedly appear in the book and the four articles and condenses them into theses that are easier to remember. Expansion, because it carries those ideas beyond the confines of formal academic space, touching families, workplaces, digital spaces, campuses, and legal institutions with language that is slightly closer to the ears of everyday life.

Having understood the role of the four journals as four surgical scalpels, we are ready to enter the first arena that is most sensitive: human dignity and the telos of life. For however strong an epistemic and political architecture we build, it will all collapse if it cannot honestly answer this simplest and heaviest question: why human beings, especially those who are most weak and most difficult to "benefit the system", must still be fully honoured.

An honest journal is not a warehouse of citations, but an operating room where the ambitions of logic are examined by dignity.

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Section III - Dignity, Telos, and the Failure of Non Sabda Foundations

Every time we utter the word dignity, what should come to mind is not only constitutional clauses or the slogans of international institutions, but the faces of those who have no ability to defend themselves. A child who will never be able to sit without assistance. An elderly person who no longer recognises their own children. A woman who lives in a wheelchair at the end of a narrow alley and can only see the world as far as her doorway opens. A refugee standing in front of the state's counter without a single document that is recognised.

Before them, all theories of dignity are tested without mercy. If a concept of dignity sounds solid only in seminars yet begins to tremble as soon as we stand beside a hospital bed or in front of a refugee tent, then there is something wrong in its foundations.

The journal article *Sabda, Human Dignity, and Telos: Reframing Moral Foundations Beyond Pure Logic* performs a careful surgery on those foundations. This treatise takes the results of that surgery and develops them in a more flowing language, without loosening the intellectual tension that has been worked out in the journal domain.

3.1 Capacity: when dignity is hung on abilities not possessed by everyone

The capacities approach usually begins from an intuition that seems strong. Human beings are regarded as having special value because they possess certain abilities: rationality, autonomy, the capacity to shape a life plan, self-awareness, the ability to act on reasons. From here, a normative step is drawn: because all human beings (ideally) have these capacities, all human beings deserve to be respected as persons with dignity.

On paper, this sequence appears neat. It is in line with moral philosophical traditions that place "rational nature" as the basis of human value. Yet once we bring this framework before Aisyah, a child who from birth cannot speak, cannot stand, and whose basic needs must all be met by others, the structure begins to crack.

First, the capacities approach is always tempted to create two layers of dignity. There is "full" dignity for those whose capacities are intact, and "qualified" dignity for those whose capacities are severely limited. In order to avoid sounding cruel, the theory then begins to speak of potential capacities, capacities represented by families, or capacities that are diffused within networks of care relations. But these terms only postpone the problem. At a certain point, the logic of capacity still places some human beings at the edges of the concept, as borderline cases to be explained later.

Second, the capacities approach tends to draw an ideal picture of the human being and then force everyone to move closer to that picture. Those who cannot meet this ideal standard, whether because of severe disability or because of very oppressive social conditions, are always in a defensive position. They must "prove" that they have value. Dignity is no longer declared, but negotiated on the basis of how close someone comes to the autonomous rational model that is used as the reference.

Third, silently the capacities approach smuggles in something it never acknowledges. It assumes that certain capacities have an incomparable value and therefore generate the obligation to respect. Yet from where this special value of capacities comes is never truly

explained. Does it come from biological facts. From moral intuitions that are assumed to be "self evident". Or from a religious tradition that is left unspoken. At this point, the journal article shows that the capacities approach often depends on a horizon of meaning that is very close to Sabda while refusing to name it.

This treatise does not intend to belittle the entire capacities tradition. It acknowledges that preserving space for rationality and autonomy is important. But it insists on one point: as long as dignity is hung on capacities, those who are weakest will always be standing on the threshold, waiting for additional justifications before they may enter.

3.2 Evolution: when a story of origins is asked to bear moral obligations

The second approach takes a different path. It does not speak directly about present capacities, but about the long journey of the human species. In this story, human beings are regarded as special because they are the outcome of an evolutionary process that has given rise to language, culture, technology, and social complexity. Dignity is then understood as respect for the position of human beings in the web of life.

As a scientific explanation, the narrative of evolution helps us see that human beings did not fall from the sky as finished creatures. We emerged through a long process, full of contingency, full of vulnerability. Yet when this narrative is asked to carry the normative weight of dignity, contradiction becomes unavoidable.

Natural selection has no concept of moral obligation. It knows adaptation, reproduction, the persistence of species, but it does not know the command "protect the weak and do not leave them behind". If dignity is placed upon this narrative, we are forced to smuggle in values that are never given by natural selection itself.

There are attempts to escape this problem, for instance by saying that precisely because we are the only species that understands the process of evolution, we therefore bear moral responsibility. Yet from where does that responsibility arise. Evolution only explains how we came to be here, not why we are obliged to treat the weak with respect. As soon as the statement "we are obliged to protect the vulnerable" is made, we have in fact gone beyond the domain of evolution and entered another normative domain.

The journal article on which this treatise is based concludes sharply: the narrative of evolution is very important as an explanation of "how". Yet as soon as we ask it to answer "why every individual, including the weakest, must be respected", the narrative runs out of language. At this point, we once again need Sabda, which says that human beings are ennobled not because of their evolutionary trajectory, but because they are called and addressed by God.

3.3 Social contract: when dignity is hung on membership status

The third approach emerges from the tradition of social contract and modern political theory. Here dignity is tied to the position of human beings as equal parties in a covenant. Citizens are pictured as seated at the contract table, real or hypothetical, agreeing on basic principles for living together. Dignity is then associated with the rights guaranteed by the structure of that contract.

This approach succeeds in explaining many crucial matters: why the power of the state must be limited, why the rights of minorities need to be protected, why fundamental freedoms must not be sacrificed entirely for the interests of the majority. Yet when we ask about those who have never truly sat at the contract table, serious problems arise.

Stateless refugees, smuggled migrant workers, indigenous communities unrecognised by the state, young children who do not yet possess legal capacity, all of these have never realistically been present as equal parties at the negotiating table. If their dignity depends on their status as members of the contract, they will always be in the most fragile position.

Some theories attempt to repair this by speaking of "hypothetical consent". As if, if they were in an equal position, they would agree to certain principles of justice. Yet here The Cohesive Tetrad highlights something: the further we move into the hypothetical realm, the greater the distance between dignity as spoken and dignity as actually experienced.

In policy practice, those who are outside the concrete contract are often treated as residue. They are dealt with through administrative tolerance, not recognised as bearers of full dignity. The journal article shows that if the contract is still regarded as the highest source of dignity, the normative foundations of justice will always tilt towards those who are already "inside the system" and abandon those who have no seat at the table.

3.4 Hidden structure: dignity as function, not as Sabda

Behind these three approaches there is in fact a single structural pattern, even if the vocabulary differs. We can simplify it in the following form:

1. Find one property or condition that is considered special: rational capacity, position in evolution, membership in a contract.
2. Declare that this property is possessed by all human beings or at least sufficiently possessed by most human beings.
3. From there, derive a moral obligation to respect all human beings.

This structure appears logical. Yet it turns dignity into a function of something else. Dignity is no longer the starting point but the result of a calculation. It has to be demonstrated through F(x), whether that F is capacity, evolution, or contract.

The problem is that every time we encounter a human being who does not fit the designed F, we are forced to write a footnote. A child who does not have "full" rational capacity, a group considered "less contributive" in evolutionary terms, or citizens who are not legally recognised, all become boundary cases.

The journal article shows that it is here that non Sabda foundations fail. The failure is not due to lack of intelligence or subtlety. It is structural. As long as dignity is understood as a function of something else, there will always be room to negotiate who deserves to be fully respected and who may be reduced.

3.5 Sabda: dignity is declared, not calculated

At this point, Sabda reappears not as an addition, but as a radical correction. In the architecture of The Cohesive Tetrad, Sabda is understood as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos.

This means that human dignity is not a conclusion, but a declaration. It does not arise after an analysis of capacities, does not emerge from a historical reading of evolution, and does not depend on membership in a contract. Dignity is declared by Sabda before all of that. Human beings are ennobled because they are called, addressed, and held accountable before God.

The consequences are very concrete. Aisyah, who will never be able to sign a contract or sit an exam of rationality, stands before Sabda as a person whose dignity is full and non negotiable. A refugee without documents has the same dignity as a citizen holding a diplomatic passport. An elderly person who no longer remembers their own name does not drop in dignity merely because their cognitive memory fades.

Sabda also transforms how we understand the telos of human life. If telos is determined by capacity or contract, then a good life is easily reduced to the life that realises the most potential, achieves the highest productivity, or enjoys the widest range of choices. Within the horizon of Sabda, telos is a response to a calling.

A mother who spends her life caring for a sick child may never appear on the stage of worldly achievement. Yet within the horizon of Sabda, she may be closer to the telos of human life than those whose names appear in many reports but stand upon unseen victims.

3.6 From foundations to architecture: the role of The Cohesive Tetrad

The foundation of Sabda alone is sufficient to topple the claims of capacities, evolution, and contract as ultimate bases for dignity. Yet in order that this foundation does not freeze into a slogan, The Cohesive Tetrad develops it into a living architecture that can be audited. Six pillars become interrelated: Sabda, logic, qualia, Mistika, and Intention-Trace Alignment, the degree of alignment between epistemic intention and epistemic-moral trace.

Sabda declares dignity and telos. Logic ensures that interpretations of Sabda and policies made in the name of dignity do not fall into contradiction and do not abuse the text. Qualia raises the experiences of those affected as moral data: the feeling of being humiliated, the sense of being disregarded, the sense of being honoured.

Mistika, defined as Mistika, the intentional-spiritual dimension of journeying toward direct encounter with the transcendent, binds this entire process to the awareness that every decision touching human dignity is part of a spiritual journey, not merely a technical decision. Akhlak is visible in concrete habits: the way a doctor greets a patient who cannot answer, the way an official arranges the queue for assistance, the way a teacher treats a slow learner.

Finally, Intention-Trace Alignment becomes an audit mechanism that leaves no room for structural hypocrisy. States, institutions, and individuals may claim that they uphold dignity. Yet some years later what is examined are the traces left behind. Whether children with disabilities live more securely. Whether refugees are better protected. Whether the elderly are

no longer treated as burdens. If the traces are the opposite of the declared intentions, then from the perspective of The Cohesive Tetrad dignity is being used as a word, not carried out as a duty.

Thus, when this treatise states that non Sabda foundations fail to sustain dignity and telos, this is not a sentimental attack on modernity. It is a conclusion drawn after methodically tracing the structural weaknesses of the capacities, evolution, and contract frameworks and then testing them against the lives of those who are weakest.

Sabda does not invalidate science, does not reject logic, and does not ignore data. Sabda instead puts all of them in their proper places: as instruments that must submit to dignity that has already been declared from the beginning. From this point, we are ready to step into the next arena: how this Sabda based foundation of dignity and telos faces democracy, public reason, and a public sphere that claims to be neutral while quietly being driven by other forces.

Dignity does not arise from capacity, evolution, or contract; dignity is valid only when Sabda pronounces it as a command.

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Section IV - Democracy, Public Reason, and Space for Sabda

Once we accept that human dignity and telos cannot be supported by capacities, evolution, or social contract alone, a question immediately arises: if Sabda truly is the foundation of dignity, how does Sabda live in a plural political space. In that space, believers sit together with those who do not believe, traditions meet one another, and interests collide. In this space, every normative claim does not only affect oneself, but becomes law that governs everyone.

Imagine a parliamentary session that is debating a bill on the protection of families and children. In the chamber, a believing member of parliament wants to speak frankly: that in his conviction, the Sabda of God commands that children be protected as a trust and that family must not be treated as a contract that can be cancelled at will. Yet before that sentence leaves his mouth, he remembers an unwritten warning: religious reasons are considered illegitimate in the public sphere. If he wants to influence the content of the law, he is expected to speak in "neutral" language: social stability, budget efficiency, the burden of the state. Sabda finally only echoes in the heart and is not given the right to speak into the microphone.

This is one face of what is called public reason. In order to prevent one religion or one interpretation of Sabda from dominating the state, the modern tradition of political philosophy designs strict rules of the game. John Rawls proposes that when citizens discuss the basic principles of the political order, they should use reasons that can be accepted by all citizens as citizens, without depending on any particular comprehensive doctrine. Jürgen Habermas emphasises that legitimacy arises from discursive processes free from coercion, in which normative claims can be tested by those affected. Behind these ideas is a fear that is understandable: fear of coercive theocracy, fear of fanaticism that refuses to listen to reasons, fear of a state that seizes the freedom of conscience.

The Cohesive Tetrad respects that fear. History teaches that Sabda used without akhlak and without logic can turn into an instrument of violence. Yet the article *Sabda, Public Reason, and Plural Societies: The Cohesive Tetrad as an Architecture for Democratic Truth Governance* shows that the recipe that pushes Sabda out of the public sphere creates a significant paradox.

When religious reasons are driven into the private realm, the public sphere does not become empty. It is immediately filled by other authorities that do not admit that they are doctrines, but act as such. Market logic, state interests, majority statistics, and technocratic discourse slowly take over the position of Sabda. The language used remains noble: dignity, justice, human rights, freedom. Yet the content of these words becomes flexible. Without a stable transcendent horizon, "dignity" can mean the protection of those who are already strong, "freedom" can mean release from all responsibility, "justice" can be reduced to the balancing of numbers in a graph.

At this point, the issue is no longer only the relationship between religion and the state, but the architecture of the authority of truth within democracy. If Sabda is not allowed to speak as Sabda in the public sphere, who in fact determines the telos of civilisation.

1. Democracy without Sabda: procedures that can be hijacked

Through the lens of The Cohesive Tetrad, modern democracy often moves on two layers. On the surface, there are procedures: elections, representation, separation of powers, freedom of expression. On the lower layer, there is a value horizon that is seldom examined: what is regarded as the goal of living together, who is regarded as a priority, how far sacrifice may be demanded.

When Sabda is privatised, this lower layer tends to be filled by three main forces.

First, the state, which wants to maintain stability. For the sake of stability, the state is easily tempted to sacrifice groups that are considered disruptive to order, even when they are struggling for truth. Second, the market, which pursues growth. For the sake of growth, the market can drive patterns of consumption and work that damage relationships, health, and the environment. Third, majority opinion, which wants to feel comfortable. For the sake of comfort, the majority can refuse to hear the cries of minorities who are wounded by political decisions.

Democratic procedures continue to run, yet in many cases these procedures simply tidy up the process of decision-making whose substance has already been determined by these three forces. In such a situation, privatising Sabda is not a way of protecting democracy, but a way of slowly emptying its soul.

2. The need for multi register public reason

The article on Sabda and public reason does not invite us to discard democracy or to distrust every supposedly neutral idea. What it does is to offer a different architecture of how public reason ought to function in a plural society.

The key is to accept that in a democratic space, the reasons citizens bring will indeed come from various “registers”: some arise from Sabda, some from secular philosophy, some from science, some from personal experience as victims. Efforts to force all these registers into a single language that appears neutral actually eradicate honesty.

Instead, The Cohesive Tetrad proposes a model of multi register public reason. In this model, a believing citizen is not forbidden to name Sabda as the deepest source of his political position. He may say in a public forum: “I reject this policy because the Sabda I believe in commands the protection of the weak and forbids the normalisation of this form of violence.” Other citizens who do not share this faith have the right to respond with legitimate questions: what is meant by violence, who is being honoured, how this policy will affect vulnerable groups.

Sabda does not automatically win simply because it is invoked. It must be willing to enter into conversation with logic, with the qualia of victims, with Mistika, with akhlak, and with Intention-Trace Alignment, the degree of alignment between epistemic intention and epistemic-moral trace.

Within a multi register model there are several important conditions.

First, every reason brought into the public sphere, whether sourced from Sabda or not, must be ready to be tested by logic. The claim that "Sabda commands X" must not be the end of the conversation. It is the beginning of a conversation in which its consistency, its implications, and whether the interpretation of Sabda itself is in line with the whole of the teaching, rather than a selective use of texts that benefit a particular group, are examined.

Second, the qualia of those most affected must be one of the judges. A policy on punishment, for example, must listen to the voices of crime victims, but also the voices of the families of offenders, especially children who will bear long term social and economic consequences. In this framework, the voice of victims is not merely an emotional illustration, but a source of knowledge about how a decision feels in human bodies and souls.

Third, Mistika, defined as Mistika, the intentional-spiritual dimension of journeying toward direct encounter with the transcendent, reminds us that every political actor will be personally accountable before God for the decisions he or she supports. A legislator who votes for a law is not only signing a legal text, but also writing a new line in his or her own spiritual history.

Fourth, akhlak must be visible in the way public figures speak and act. Intense debate must not be used as an excuse for insult and deceit. Sabda that is turned into a weapon to humiliate political opponents is in fact being betrayed.

Fifth, Intention-Trace Alignment tests the claims of good intentions in the political world. A government may state that a particular law is made to protect the dignity of families. Yet if after five or ten years data and testimonies show that the law instead multiplies domestic violence, worsens economic discrimination, or makes access to assistance more difficult for those who are most vulnerable, then the claim of good intention collapses. Here the audit cannot stop at "procedurally correct", but must ask: what moral traces has this policy left.

3. A concrete example: freedom of expression and the policing of "hatred"

To see how this architecture works, imagine a bill intended to regulate hate speech in the digital sphere. The government argues that this new regulation is needed to stop the spread of hatred based on ethnicity, religion, race, and intergroup relations. Many citizens agree, especially after witnessing incidents of violence triggered by provocations on social media.

Yet the bill contains two vague clauses: the definition of "hatred" is left very broad, and the authority to decide which content must be taken down is given almost entirely to a single executive body. On the surface, this looks like a reasonable step. Beneath the surface, there is a risk that this regulation will be used to silence criticism of the state or the majority group in the name of preserving order.

Within a notion of public reason that privatises Sabda, the debate may stall at the tension between freedom of expression and social stability. On one side, human rights activists remind us of the dangers of silencing. On the other side, the government warns of the dangers of disintegration.

Within the Sabda-Logic framework, the reading becomes sharper. Sabda asks: may the state raise itself up as the sole interpreter of what counts as hatred and what counts as legitimate criticism. History reminds us that power that refuses correction tends to produce injustice. The

qualia of minority groups that have previously experienced silencing become important evidence: the fear of speaking, the sense of always being watched, the feeling of being unsafe in the public space.

Logic then examines the design of the law: whether there is an independent mechanism of appeal, whether the definition of hatred is sufficiently narrow, whether the procedure for content takedown is transparent and reviewable in court. Mistika reminds legislators that the protection against hate speech must not be turned into a blanket that covers the abuse of power. Akhlak appears in the courage to reject clauses that are too loose even if they benefit the government of the day.

Intention-Trace Alignment will examine this law after some years of implementation: whether it truly reduces violence based on hatred, or instead increases cases of criminalisation of journalists, activists, and ordinary citizens who criticise policy. If what emerges is the latter, then that law, no matter how beautiful its title, ought to be revised or repealed.

4. Sabda in the public sphere: between honesty and danger

Opening space for Sabda in the public sphere is not without risk. There is a real danger that groups claiming to speak in the name of Sabda will use that position to oppress others. There is a dark history of Sabda being used to justify slavery, the oppression of women, and the marginalisation of minorities.

Here lies the importance of The Cohesive Tetrad as an architecture, not merely a slogan. Sabda brought into the public sphere must always pass through the four other guardians: logic, qualia, Mistika, and akhlak, and be tested through Intention-Trace Alignment. Interpretations of Sabda that produce patterns of systematic humiliation of certain groups, that ignore the cries of victims, and that are carried out without a willingness to be accountable before God, can be recognised as abuses.

This model rejects two extremes at once. On one side, it rejects theocracy that forces all citizens to submit to a single interpretation of Sabda without space for dialogue. On the other side, it rejects empty secularism that forces all citizens to hide their Sabda when they enter the public sphere.

The Cohesive Tetrad offers a middle path that is not in fact a compromise, but a reordering of authority. Sabda remains acknowledged as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos. Yet Sabda is not allowed to walk alone. It invites logic to test coherence, qualia to recall lived experience, Mistika to guard intention, akhlak to guard character, and Intention-Trace Alignment to ensure that the traces of decisions are in line with the intentions and norms that are claimed.

5. A bridge toward law and artificial intelligence

From here, it is natural for the treatise to move into a more concrete and technical arena, namely the encounter between law, data, and artificial intelligence. In that arena, claims of the neutrality of logic reach their peak. Algorithms assess the risk that someone will commit another crime, decide who is eligible for credit, determine levels of surveillance over particular areas, and even assist judges in handing down sentences.

If in the political sphere Sabda is already often asked to step aside, in technical spaces like law and artificial intelligence Sabda is regarded as almost irrelevant. There, what speaks are models, metrics, and confidence intervals.

The next section will show that expelling Sabda from this space is not only a theoretical mistake, but also a source of practical damage. When statistical logic and legal procedures operate without the horizon of Sabda, without the qualia of victims, without Mistika, without akhlak, and without Intention-Trace Alignment, they can harden injustice with an appearance that seems highly rational.

It is at that point that the battle between Sabda and logic will enter its coldest and most decisive phase: whether human beings before law and algorithms are still seen as dignified subjects called by Sabda, or only as data points in a risk matrix to be managed as efficiently as possible.

A democracy that expels Sabda from public discourse merely replaces the tyranny of theology with the tyranny of procedure.

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Section V - Law, Artificial Intelligence, and Truth Governance

If there is any space in which logic feels most powerful, it is the legal space and the technological space. There, the words most often spoken are procedure, rules of the game, performance metrics, and model validation. Judicial decisions are explained through syllogisms. Algorithmic outputs are explained through statistics. Between the two, human life and death are hung on something that appears very neat and rational.

Yet it is precisely at this point that the struggle between Sabda and logic becomes sharpest. Law and artificial intelligence are not merely administrative tools. Both are machines of truth governance: they determine who is considered guilty, who may be trusted, who deserves a second chance, and who is slowly pushed to the margins.

5.1 Law as a machine of normative logic

Ideally, law is the human effort to order life together on the basis of explicit norms. Rules are formulated, procedures are arranged, evidence is regulated, and authority is limited. In the courtroom, it appears as if everything proceeds within a clear logical framework: premises in the form of facts, premises in the form of rules, conclusions in the form of judgments.

Yet anyone who has ever been close to legal practice knows that this is only half the story.

First, law is always born out of normative choices: what is considered a crime, what is considered a minor offence, who is given special protection. These choices are never neutral. They are influenced by history, ideology, interests, and at times prejudice. Once a statute is completed, logic indeed comes in to work, but it works upon a value foundation that has been set in advance.

Second, in practice, legal logic often forms an alliance with institutional logic. Courts seek efficiency. Prosecutors want high conviction rates. Police want “crime figures to appear lower”. Behind formal decisions that look clear, there are structural pressures that are hard to read from statutory text.

Third, in many systems certain groups are historically positioned as “high risk” or “prone to offending”. Poor neighbourhoods, particular communities, or certain professions are more frequently the targets of patrols and raids. As a result, the recorded case data becomes skewed: groups that are watched more closely will be caught more often.

All of this is then collected as historical data. Up to this point, we have not spoken of artificial intelligence at all. We have only seen how law, as a machine of normative logic, already carries bias that is wrapped in the language of procedure.

5.2 Artificial intelligence as an extension of logic

Now artificial intelligence enters. It promises something seductive: the ability to read patterns that humans cannot see, consistency in decision-making, efficiency in managing caseloads. Risk assessment systems are built to help judges decide whether defendants should be released

or detained. Predictive models are used to map “hot spots” of crime. Trust scores are used to decide who is eligible for credit, for access to services, or for tighter surveillance.

On the surface, everything appears more objective. Models are trained on big data. Validation is carried out using accuracy metrics. Reports are written in scientific language. Yet The Cohesive Tetrad reminds us: algorithmic logic operates within the same value horizon as the law that produced it, except that old biases are now packaged in a new way.

The historical data used to train the model is a mirror of past practice: patrol practice, arrest practice, prosecution practice. If those practices are biased, the model will simply learn the patterns of bias and package them as scores. When a judge sees a high risk score for a defendant from a particular area, he or she may feel to have become “more just” by no longer relying on personal intuition. In reality, the judge is relying on the intuition of the past transformed into numbers.

The article *Sabda, Logic, and Truth Governance: The Cohesive Tetrad for Law and Artificial Intelligence* unpacks this mechanism technically. This treatise takes its core insight: artificial intelligence, without the architecture of Sabda-Logic, tends to act as an accelerator of whatever is already wrong within the system.

5.3 The illusion of neutrality and the birth of “statistical dogma”

In the past, religious dogma was at times used to close discussion: “this is the will of God”, full stop. In the age of data, a similar risk appears in another form. Data, models, and metrics can turn into “statistical dogma” that is immune to criticism.

Sentences such as “this model has been validated”, “the accuracy is very high”, “the result is statistically significant” are used to shut down moral questions: just for whom, harmful to whom, honouring whom, and sacrificing whom.

In fact, statistical validation only answers one thing: how well the model reproduces patterns in past data. It does not answer whether those past patterns were just. If the past was full of discrimination, a model that is highly accurate in imitating the past is highly accurate in imitating discrimination.

Here The Cohesive Tetrad reads the shift of authority sharply. Sabda, which should be Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, is forced to step back in the name of neutrality. Its position is then taken over by a combination of formal legality and data. The one says “in accordance with procedure”, the other says “in accordance with the model”. Between the two, human beings whose lives are determined by procedures and models are often not given space to speak as human beings.

5.4 Sabda transforms how we see offenders, victims, and systems

This problem becomes very concrete if we return to a simple story.

Imagine a young man from a neighbourhood that has for years been stigmatised as a “red zone”. He is involved in a minor fight and enters the justice system. There are no serious injuries, no record of serious prior offences. Yet the risk assessment system, trained on decades of case

data, assigns him a “high risk” label simply because he comes from a particular postcode, has irregular work, and lives in an area frequently raided.

In a law and AI paradigm without Sabda, this is considered normal. He is placed as a high risk entity. Keeping him behind bars is seen as a way to protect society.

Within the horizon of Sabda, the picture changes. Sabda declares that this young man, even when at fault, still bears a dignity that cannot be negotiated. He is not merely a “risk factor”. He is a human being who will stand alone before God. Punishment may still be necessary, but punishment must not be governed solely by the logic of risk management.

Sabda refuses this reduction. Sabda reminds us that

- the offender remains a human being called to repentance,
- the victim remains a human being entitled to justice,
- and the system remains part of the circle of moral responsibility.

Thus Sabda does not abolish law, but changes its orientation: from merely managing risk to repairing human beings and structures.

5.5 The six pillars of The Cohesive Tetrad as an audit framework for law and AI

In order that this change of orientation does not remain a moral exhortation, The Cohesive Tetrad offers six pillars as an audit framework.

1. **Sabda**

   Sabda, as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, declares that every human being has dignity and that the purpose of law is justice that protects the weak, not mere order. Every bill, judicial protocol, and deployment of artificial intelligence must be confronted with this question: to what extent is it aligned with that acknowledgement of dignity, especially the dignity of those who are most easily sacrificed by the system.

2. **Logic**

   Logic is not dismissed, but called to work more honestly. It examines whether the construction of rules and models is consistent. Whether the variables used to determine risk scores are normatively relevant or merely easy to measure. Whether we have mistaken correlation for causation. Whether the procedures for using models in the courtroom are consistent with principles of due process.

3. **Qualia**

   Qualia elevates the inner experiences of those affected as part of knowledge, not as mere illustration but as moral data. Fear in facing the system, the feeling of being presumed guilty before being heard, the sense of being dehumanised at the service counter, are indicators of whether law and artificial intelligence truly honour dignity. Without qualia, we see only case numbers, not the wounds that remain.

4. **Mistika**

   Mistika, defined as Mistika, the intentional-spiritual dimension of journeying toward direct encounter with the transcendent, reminds us that judges, prosecutors, police officers, policymakers, and model developers are all on a spiritual journey. They are not merely carrying out technical tasks, but are writing a history before God. Deciding the fate of human beings solely by following a risk score without the courage to ask "is this right before God" is a form of flight from spiritual responsibility.

5. **Akhlak**

   Akhlak is visible on the surface: in the way officers treat those under arrest, the way judges explain their decisions, the way staff respond to citizens who are confused, the way system developers respond to reports of harmful impacts. A culture of belittling, insulting, and degrading cannot be redeemed by how sophisticated the model is or how complete the procedure.

6. **Intention-Trace Alignment**

   This is the principle that binds everything together: Intention-Trace Alignment, the degree of alignment between epistemic intention and epistemic-moral trace. Justice systems and technology institutions may claim very noble intentions: for security, for justice, for efficiency. Yet some years later, the question is simple: what moral traces have been left.

- Are groups that were previously marginalised now more protected.
- Has the level of violence truly dropped without doubling the wounds.
- Has public trust in justice genuinely increased.

If the honest answer is negative, then from the perspective of The Cohesive Tetrad the system has failed, however sophisticated its data and however neat its procedures.

5.6 Practical implications: from design, to use, to revision of systems

This framework is not intended merely for reflection. It carries practical consequences that can be detailed in three stages.

1. **Design stage**

   - Every artificial intelligence project in the legal field must begin with a clear normative declaration: what is the moral telos of this system.
   - Sabda, logic, qualia, Mistika, and akhlak must be present at the design table. Not only engineers and economists, but also legal scholars, theologians who understand Sabda, ethicists, and representatives of affected communities.

2. **Usage stage**

   - Scores, recommendations, and predictions must not be treated as verdicts, but as inputs for consideration.

- Judges and officials must be given space and trained to dare to depart from model recommendations when a conscience submitted to Sabda, supported by logic and qualia, reveals injustice.

3. **Revision and institutional repentance stage**

   - System evaluation must be conducted regularly, not only from the technical side, but also from the side of moral traces.
   - When patterns of injustice are found, the courage to admit fault and change the system is part of institutional akhlak. Here, religious language about repentance finds its structural translation: not only the repentance of individuals, but the repentance of institutions.

5.7 From courtroom and server back to the human face

In the end, this whole discussion about law and artificial intelligence returns to the faces we mentioned earlier. The face of the young man who stands before the justice system for the first time. The face of the child born into a neighbourhood that is always suspected. The face of the mother who stands anxiously at the assistance counter.

If, after all legal reforms and technological innovations, these faces are still cast down, still feel disregarded, still live with the same fear, then we must honestly admit that Sabda-Logic has not truly worked.

For that reason, when this treatise speaks of the victory of Sabda on the field of logic, one of its measures lies precisely here:

- whether in the courtroom, offenders and victims are treated as human beings, not as cases;
- whether in the server room, models are treated as tools that may be corrected, not as invisible judges;
- whether in the policy space, statistical figures are read together with the life stories of those who stand behind the numbers.

If so, then Sabda is no longer a guest left standing outside the courthouse and the data centre. Sabda has entered, taken a seat, and is presiding over the conversation, not through shouting, but through an architecture that makes logic, data, and power submit to the human dignity it has declared.

From here, it is natural for the treatise to move to two spaces that are no less strategic: the university as a node in the knowledge ecosystem, and the civilisational epilogue that summarises the journey from journals, to the treatise, to praxis. There the future of The Cohesive Tetrad will be determined, not only by the strength of its arguments, but by the willingness of human beings and institutions to live under the rule of sensibility shaped by Sabda-Logic.

Law in the age of data is highly skilled at calculating risk, but it becomes truly just only when it dares to see the face behind every score.

Section VI - Everyday Life, Digital Space, and the Practice of Sabda-Logic

Up to this point, Sabda-Logic may still sound like something that operates in elevated spaces: epistemology, theories of dignity, public reason, law, and artificial intelligence. Yet if it moves only there, it will remain an elegant framework in the sky that never sets foot on the ground. In reality, the decisions that most often wound human dignity are not only the big ones taken in courts or parliaments, but the small daily decisions made without awareness: how we speak at home, how we spread information, how we judge others at work.

This treatise therefore needs to take one step down. Not in order to belittle the higher domains, but to acknowledge that the most honest practice of Sabda-Logic actually happens in places that look ordinary.

1. Family as the first school of truth governance

Imagine a modest family. A father comes home from work with a tired face. At the dinner table, he hears that his child has been accused of cheating at school. The teacher has sent a short message: there is evidence that the child's answers are very similar to those of the classmate sitting next to him.

The father's first reflex may be anger. He wants to scold harshly, perhaps even say something that cuts: "You are a disgrace, you are a liar." In moments like these, truth governance is being tested, not in a courtroom but in the most intimate space.

If Sabda is forgotten, the father will use a simple logic: cheating is wrong, my child cheated, therefore my child is a liar. Punishment is decided quickly. But if Sabda is remembered as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, the scene can change. Sabda teaches that human beings can be guilty without losing their dignity, that wrongdoing must be acknowledged but also directed toward repair, not destruction.

The father can pause and ask, with a more patient logic: what actually happened. He invites his child to tell the story. Perhaps the child did cheat; perhaps he is the victim of a grading system that is unclear. The child's qualia, his fear, shame, and desire to defend himself, become part of the family's knowledge, not something pushed aside.

Mistika, which is understood as Mistika, the intentional-spiritual dimension of journeying toward direct encounter with the transcendent, reminds the father that the way he handles this event is part of his own spiritual journey. He is not merely "educating a child", he is being tested: whether he uses his position of power with trustworthiness or with anger.

Akhlak appears in his concrete choices. He can speak in a tone that honours and is at the same time firm: explaining why cheating is wrong, yet opening a path for the child to admit his fault without being crushed. He teaches the child that being honest is more important than looking clever.

In the end, Intention-Trace Alignment, the degree of alignment between epistemic intention and epistemic-moral trace, will test the father's intention. If he says that he punishes for the child's own good, the traces several years later will show whether the child grows into a more

honest and confident person, or instead becomes fearful and accustomed to lying in order to avoid punishment.

Without realising it, such a family is becoming the first school of The Cohesive Tetrad. There Sabda is honoured, logic is used, the child's qualia are heard, Mistika colours the parents' intention, akhlak is visible in action, and Intention-Trace Alignment examines the long term outcome.

2. The workplace: truth among targets and reputation

Move now to another space: a busy office. A manager receives a report that his team has failed to reach the sales target. At the same time, he knows there is a project that is reported as "successful" even though its success relies heavily on small manipulations: exaggerated claims, unrealistic promises, selective use of data.

In a work culture governed only by the logic of targets, the manager will tend to close his eyes to manipulation as long as the numbers look good. Truth becomes something flexible, as long as the company's reputation appears intact.

The practice of Sabda-Logic places this situation under a different light. Sabda declares that honesty is not an accessory but a command. Deceiving customers, twisting data, or promising what will not be delivered is a form of wrongdoing, even if it is difficult to prove in court.

Logic is forced to be honest about the work structure. Does the company's bonus and recognition system quietly encourage manipulation. Does the performance evaluation framework make people feel they must sacrifice truth for numbers.

The qualia of employees also becomes a source of knowledge. The sense of pressure, of having to wear a constant mask, the fear of contradicting superiors, all of these signal that something is unhealthy in the organisation's truth governance.

Mistika reminds us that the workplace is not a neutral zone. Every choice the manager makes, from how he writes reports to how he rebukes his team, is part of the deeds that will accompany him. He cannot hide behind the sentence "this is just business". Before God, it remains part of his life.

Akhlak is visible in the courage to say enough. He may have to admit to his superiors that some impressive numbers are actually built upon unsound practices. He may have to redesign the evaluation system so that honesty is rewarded rather than punished.

Intention-Trace Alignment then examines the intention he claims. If the manager says he wants to build a healthy and principled team, yet the traces over the years show a culture full of fear and manipulation, that intention must be questioned.

Here The Cohesive Tetrad helps us see that the "crisis of truth" is not only about fake news on the internet or biased court decisions, but also about how we arrange daily work.

3. Digital space: between algorithms, ego, and Sabda

We now enter a domain that is increasingly dominant in modern life: digital space. Here truth, attention, and emotion are traded at scale. Social media algorithms are designed to maximise engagement. Content that triggers anger and curiosity often spreads faster than content that is calm and reflective.

A teenager can spend hours in front of a screen, jumping from one video to another. The algorithm learns from every second he watches, from the brief pause before he scrolls, from which videos he replays. Slowly, his feed fills with a single pattern: shallow entertainment, harsh debates, or extreme narratives. On the surface, he feels free to choose. Beneath the surface, his choices have been shaped.

In a space like this, the practice of Sabda-Logic becomes very concrete. Sabda asks: what are you doing with the time of your life, with your gaze, with your attention. Sabda reminds us that the heart can harden or soften depending on what it consumes.

Logic tries to understand the mechanisms. How the algorithm works, why certain content appears repeatedly, who benefits. Without this understanding, we easily blame individuals without seeing the structure.

The qualia of digital users are crucial alarms. The emptiness after a long scrolling session, the anxiety when seeing other people's lives that appear perfect, the anger that is continuously fuelled by controversial content. These qualia tell us that something is out of balance.

Mistika appears when someone decides to pause and ask honestly: what is this algorithm doing to my soul. He may choose to reset his habits, limit certain types of content, or take a digital break as part of his journey toward encounter with God.

Akhlak is visible in how a person behaves as both producer and consumer of content. Does he spread information he has not checked, simply to be the fastest. Does he write comments that belittle others only because he himself is unseen. Does he use the algorithm to spread good, or merely to inflate his ego.

Intention-Trace Alignment becomes a mirror. A content creator may say that he wants to inspire, yet the trace left behind is rising addiction, polarisation, and a cult of his own persona. An activist may say she fights for justice, yet the trace is a blind hatred that burns the bridges of dialogue.

Within the framework of The Cohesive Tetrad, digital space is not the enemy but a field. There Sabda-Logic can be practised in very practical ways: in choices of who to follow or unfollow, in decisions to refrain from writing hurtful comments, in the habit of checking sources before sharing.

4. Universities and the knowledge ecosystem: from article factories to houses of truth-seeking

There is another space that is extremely important for truth governance: the university. There knowledge is produced, measured, and distributed. In many places, universities pride

themselves on the number of articles, international rankings, and citation indices. Behind this pride, however, lies a dilemma.

A student may come with a thesis topic found in the field, for example the eviction of urban poor residents who have lived for decades in one area. The data he collects is full of stories: loss of home, loss of livelihood, family breakdown. When he consults, he hears a gentle suggestion: "This topic is heavy and politically sensitive, better choose something safe and easy to publish."

At this point, the university stands at a crossroads between becoming a factory of articles and a house of truth-seeking.

Sabda reminds us that knowledge is not only for rankings but for upholding justice and honouring human beings. Knowledge that closes its eyes to social wounds while busy tinkering with safe variables is forgetting this calling.

Logic is of course still needed. Not every emotive topic can be handled adequately in a single thesis. Yet logic must not be used as a pretext for excluding the weakest from the research agenda.

The qualia of displaced residents, their tears, their sense of loss, their sense of not being heard, are all part of the knowledge about policy impact. If the university shuts its ears to these voices in order to pursue "easier to publish" themes, it is in fact cutting itself off from reality.

Mistika works in the hearts of honest lecturers and students. They know that their choice of topic, the way they write, and their courage to name injustice correctly are all part of their spiritual journey.

Akhlak is visible in daily academic culture: how lecturers treat students from disadvantaged backgrounds, how the campus responds to reports of abuse, how leaders choose between clean research funding and compromising collaborations.

Intention-Trace Alignment examines the claim of a university that describes itself as a "house of truth". If after many years the campus produces numerous articles but little courage to speak against manifest injustice around it, that claim needs to be re-examined.

Through the lens of The Cohesive Tetrad, universities are called to return to their deepest mission. Article literature, laboratories, and citation indices remain important. But all of them must submit to the telos declared by Sabda: to serve truth, honour human beings, and refuse to become an instrument of oppressive power.

5. Small practices that will decide the large ones

All of this may sound heavy. Yet the practice of Sabda-Logic does not always have to take the form of major campaigns or public policies. It begins with small choices repeated every day: how we speak to our parents, how we respond to news, how we work, how we use social media, how we study.

At each of these small points, the six pillars of The Cohesive Tetrad can be present in simple ways. Sabda, as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, is remembered in prayer, in reading, in reflection. Logic is used to examine incoming claims so that we are not easily deceived. The qualia of those around us are heard rather than ignored. Mistika reminds us that there is no neutral space before God. Akhlak is trained through small habits of honesty and gentleness. Intention-Trace Alignment becomes the habit of looking back, after some time, to see whether the traces of our lives align with the intentions we professed.

If these small practices are neglected, we should not be surprised when, at the moment of having to take major decisions, we fail. Law, artificial intelligence, state policy, and the direction of civilisation are moved by human beings who have been formed by these small exercises.

For that reason, before closing the treatise with concise theses and a civilisational epilogue, one more binding step is needed: to formulate explicitly the key theses of Sabda-Logic that can serve as cross-context anchors. These theses are not substitutes for practice, but short compasses that help us remember direction amidst complexity. That will be the task of the next Section.

The battle between Sabda and logic does not begin in courtrooms, but in how we answer messages, scroll our screens, and choose to care.

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Section VII - Universities, Knowledge, and the Knowledge Ecosystem

7.1 Universities at a crossroads

Universities always describe themselves as houses of knowledge and guardians of truth. In brochures, their visions and missions sound noble: to enlighten, to humanise, to develop knowledge for the sake of welfare. Yet if we walk slowly through the corridors of academic bureaucracy, the rhythm we hear is often different: publication targets, accreditation, rankings, incentives, clusters, citation indices.

At this point, universities live in two worlds at once. On the surface, they use the language of truth and dignity. At the operational level, they tend to use the language of production and performance. Research is measured by the quantity of articles. Teaching is measured by administrative compliance. Community service is often reduced to activity reports.

The Cohesive Tetrad does not reject the importance of indicators, management, and organisation. But this framework forces us to ask: whom are universities serving. If a university is a primary node of truth governance in a society, it cannot be content with being a neat article factory. It must be willing to be measured by heavier questions:

- does it truly safeguard human dignity in the way it produces and disseminates knowledge,
- does it shape a knowledge ecosystem that honours the weak, not merely enriches the already powerful,
- does it have the courage to uphold truth when that truth disturbs the comfort of sponsors, markets, or the state.

Here The Cohesive Tetrad offers a surgical instrument: the university needs to be reread as a node of truth governance that is subject to Sabda, logic, qualia, Mistika, akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment.

7.2 The university as a node of truth governance

When we call the university a node of truth governance, we are saying that it does not merely produce data and theory. It participates in organising how a society decides what:

- is counted as scientific,
- is recognised as a valid basis for policy,
- is deemed worthy of entering textbooks and curricula,
- and is considered suitable to be taught to the next generation.

In other words, the university is one of the places where epistemic authority is assembled and distributed. People turn to universities when they want to know whether a medicine is safe, whether a policy is reasonable, whether a statistical figure can be trusted.

Within the architecture of The Cohesive Tetrad, this position is not neutral. Sabda, as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, demands that universities do not merely produce knowledge that is “technically correct”, but also remain faithful to telos: honouring human dignity, safeguarding justice, and avoiding oppression.

This means that universities must dare to pose three questions to themselves:

1. **What is the telos of the knowledge they produce.**
   Are research agendas directed primarily toward increasing citation counts, or toward engaging the real problems that wound human beings and the earth.
2. **Who benefits and who is burdened by that knowledge.**
   Do research outcomes help strengthen vulnerable groups, or do they refine the language of exploitation.
3. **Before whom is all this to be accounted for.**
   Does the university feel accountable only to accreditation bodies and sponsors, or is it also conscious of standing before God, who sees how truth is treated.

These questions lead us to the work of audit: research, curricula, and academic culture need to be examined through the lens of The Cohesive Tetrad, not only with administrative checklists.

7.3 Auditing research with The Cohesive Tetrad

Research is the pride of universities. Yet research can also become a source of distortion when metrics displace meaning. Auditing research using The Cohesive Tetrad moves through six pillars.

First, Sabda asks: what themes are prioritised and what is the telos of this research. If most research is directed toward safe topics that benefit the market while avoiding the most painful injustices in society, Sabda will highlight that imbalance. Sabda reminds us that knowledge that refuses to face social wounds is drifting away from its calling.

Second, logic examines the structure of arguments and methodology. It demands epistemic honesty: are the premises clear, is the data relevant, do the conclusions not overreach beyond what the evidence supports. In many places, this logic is sacrificed for the sake of publication speed. Articles are assembled like factory products rather than the outcome of serious intellectual struggle.

Third, qualia shifts the focus to those who are researched. What does it feel like to be a research subject. The residents who are interviewed. Patients whose clinical data are extracted. Local communities whose territories become sampling sites. Their qualia - feeling respected or exploited, involved or manipulated - are part of the moral audit of research. A study that is methodologically rigorous yet leaves behind a sense of being used among respondents is harming dignity, regardless of how high the journal's index is.

Fourth, Mistika, which is defined as Mistika, the intentional-spiritual dimension of journeying toward direct encounter with the transcendent, probes the deepest intentions of researchers. Why is this research being done. Is it driven by a genuine desire to understand truth and serve life, or merely by the pursuit of promotion, incentives, and recognition. Mistika cannot be measured in numbers, but can be felt in how researchers handle data, acknowledge limitations, and share credit.

Fifth, akhlak is visible in everyday work ethics. Are data stored and used honestly. Do authors hesitate to name colleagues who have actually contributed. Do lab heads exploit students as cheap labour without adequate supervision. Here akhlak becomes a mirror: research that yields

brilliant findings but grows from a culture that oppresses the younger generation is sending a warning signal.

Sixth, Intention-Trace Alignment, the degree of alignment between epistemic intention and epistemic-moral trace, ties everything together. Research is claimed to be conducted for the sake of the environment, of humanity, of justice. Yet several years later, what is the trace.

- Do the communities that hosted the research experience improvement in their lives.
- Do policies shift toward greater fairness.
- Or do research results merely add to a publication list while structures of injustice remain intact.

If the trace does not align with the intentions claimed, The Cohesive Tetrad compels us to admit that there has been failure, not only at the level of strategy, but at the level of trust and moral responsibility.

7.4 Auditing curriculum and pedagogy: from transmission to formation

Curricula are often discussed as lists of courses and learning outcomes. From the perspective of Sabda-Logic, however, a curriculum is a design for forming human beings.

Sabda asks: what kind of human person do we intend to form. If the final goal is merely "competent in the labour market", then curricula will be directed toward sharpening technical skills yet may neglect dignity, justice, and life's telos. In the horizon of Sabda, the goal of education is deeper: to bring forth human beings who can bear the trust of truth and social responsibility.

Logic examines whether the sequence of courses, the structure of assignments, and the modes of evaluation help students think coherently, critically, and honestly with respect to evidence. Or does the curriculum quietly encourage survival strategies: studying only for exams, memorising theory without grasping context, writing assignments solely to pass.

The qualia of students are crucial indicators. What does it feel like to be a student under this curriculum. Do they feel accompanied or abandoned. Do they experience the classroom as a space for seeking truth, or merely as an administrative pipeline. Widespread fatigue, cynicism, and alienation among students are signs that a curriculum that looks sound on paper is failing in bodies and souls.

Mistika touches a dimension often absent from modern educational design: the awareness that learning is part of a spiritual journey. A student who writes a thesis on forced evictions, for example, is not merely collecting data. They are learning to feel the suffering of victims and to shape a moral response. If education ignores this dimension, campuses will produce graduates who are skilled at calculation but numb in the face of injustice.

Akhlak is visible in how lecturers and institutions treat students. Is the classroom a safe place for asking questions and admitting ignorance, or a space where authority must never be questioned. How the university handles plagiarism, exam cheating, and classroom conflict becomes a tangible mirror of whether akhlak is genuinely taught or merely displayed in brochures.

Again, Intention-Trace Alignment becomes the test. A curriculum may claim to produce graduates who are principled, critical, and socially engaged. Yet twenty years later, the same graduates appear as corrupt elites, cold technocrats, and professionals who readily compromise for gain. If this is what happens, the claim of dignified education must be acknowledged as a failure. Not because there were too few ethics modules, but because the structure of learning never truly integrated Sabda, logic, qualia, Mistika, and akhlak within the learning experience.

7.5 Academic culture: from article factory to house of trust for truth

The phrase "article factory" emerges when the rhythm of university life is wholly governed by the logic of output: how many publications, how many citations, how many grants. Once again, publications and citations are not wrong. The problem arises when these metrics are promoted to telos.

In such a culture, lecturers and researchers are judged almost exclusively by their publication lists. Topics that are rich in moral significance but difficult to publish in prestigious journals are gradually abandoned. Studies that engage the suffering of communities surrounding the campus are deemed too risky. Community engagement is turned into a formality.

A house of trust for truth operates with a different logic. There, publications remain valued, but they are disciplined to remain subordinate to the telos declared by Sabda. Truth is not measured only by "indexed or not", but by the question: does this knowledge bring improvement to human life, especially to those who have long been voiceless.

Such a culture demands change at many levels. Senate meetings are no longer confined to rankings and accreditation forms. Conversations about justice, dignity, and the direction of knowledge are given serious space. Structural recognition is not reserved only for those who write the most, but also for those who are most devoted to mentoring, most honest in refusing problematic grants, and most consistent in defending academic integrity when no one is watching.

Here The Cohesive Tetrad works as a structure of sensibility. Sabda reminds the university that it will be held accountable before God for how it treats truth. Logic helps design policies that are consistent with that vision. The qualia of campus members show whether those policies nurture or damage them. Mistika guards against institutional ambition swallowing its foundational intention. Akhlak is embodied in daily habits. Intention-Trace Alignment ensures that the slogan "excellent and of character" is genuinely visible in the traces of graduates and in the institution's impact on its surroundings.

7.6 A knowledge ecosystem beyond the campus

Universities do not live in a vacuum. They are connected to government, industry, media, local communities, and the digital ecosystem. The way universities converse with this network determines whether they become "brains" that are cold or "consciences" that are alive.

In a healthy knowledge ecosystem, universities do not monopolise truth. They acknowledge that knowledge lives in indigenous communities, grassroots organisations, and the experiences of victims of misguided policies. The Cohesive Tetrad invites universities to listen to other idioms of truth without losing Sabda as their compass.

For example, when designing research on the impact of mining, a university does not only invite companies and ministries, but also residents who have lost their land. When discussing policy proposals, the university does not rely solely on survey data, but also on testimonies from those most affected.

In their relationships with industry and the state, The Cohesive Tetrad demands one thing: do not sell truth. Collaboration is permissible, funding is permissible, but Sabda, logic, qualia, Mistika, akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment must remain as filters. If requested research clearly contributes to intensifying exploitation, a university that is truly a house of trust for truth will dare to say no, even if that means losing a major grant.

7.7 The path of transition: from rhetoric to habituation

Shifting the university from an article factory to a house of trust for truth is not a one-day task. It is a long transition, often exhausting and sometimes unpopular.

Yet this transition can begin with concrete, repeatable steps. For instance, one faculty decides to carry out a Sabda-Logic audit of a single programme of study, honestly identifying where the curriculum neglects dignity and telos. One research institute decides to include qualia indicators and social traces in its evaluation of research. One rectorate decides to create a special award for work that benefits vulnerable groups, even if it is not published in top-ranked journals.

Each small step, if repeated and documented, will establish new habits. Over time, the campus's rule of feeling shifts. People begin to sense that manipulating data for publication is not only wrong but shameful. Refusing problematic funding is no longer seen as foolish but as honourable. Teaching with heart, researching with courage, and managing the university with spiritual awareness cease to sound naive and are recognised again as the core of academic duty.

It is at that point that the university truly becomes a node of truth governance. Not because it possesses the largest buildings or the most journals, but because it safeguards truth in ways that can be accounted for before Sabda, before human beings, and before history. The Cohesive Tetrad is no longer merely the title of a book or a theoretical framework; it becomes a pattern of life that permeates research, curricula, culture, and the knowledge ecosystem.

A university that forgets it is a house of trust for truth will become a factory of degrees and articles, silent of conscience.

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Section VIII - Twelve Theses of Sabda-Logic

This section condenses the entire tract into twelve core theses. Each thesis is formulated in language that can be grasped across disciplines, while retaining the intellectual tension that arises from the book *The Cohesive Tetrad: Jalan Menuju Kebenaran* and the four accompanying journal articles. These theses are not substitutes for the long arguments in the earlier sections; they are knots that bind them.

Thesis 1

The central crisis of the data age is not lack of information, but misplacing the authority of truth.

We are not living in a time of data scarcity, but of uncontrolled data abundance. The biggest problem is not surface-level hoaxes, but the quiet conviction that logic and data can replace the role of a normative compass. When graphs, scores, and statistical models ascend the throne as arbiters of what is true and what is good, while Sabda is pushed back into the private sphere, the architecture of truth shifts. On that shift grow many forms of well-organised injustice.

Thesis 2

Logic is never neutral and is never sufficient to determine telos.

Logic is immensely valuable, but it always works within a horizon of values that precedes it. The choice of premises, definitions, and what is counted as relevant does not arise from logic itself. For that reason, the claim that pure logic can govern the entire architecture of truth is an illusion. Logic must be used as guardian of coherence and rigour, but it has no right to determine on its own what humans live for and who must be honoured without condition. Once logic is elevated to the position of telos-setter, it changes from instrument into idol.

Thesis 3

Human dignity cannot be consistently grounded in capacities, evolution, or social contract alone.

Capacity-based, evolutionary, and social contract approaches contribute important insights into our understanding of the human. Yet when asked to carry the full weight of dignity for those who are most vulnerable, they falter. Children with severe disabilities, elders with dementia, undocumented refugees, and unrecognised communities expose the limits of these approaches. If dignity depends on capacities, they will always remain at the margins. If dignity is derived from evolution, natural selection has no language of moral obligation. If dignity hangs on the social contract, those outside the contract will hover in uncertainty.

Thesis 4

Sabda is the only foundation strong enough for human dignity and telos.

Within the architecture of The Cohesive Tetrad, Sabda is understood as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos. Human dignity does not arise from capacities, species membership, or agreement; it is declared by Sabda. Therefore dignity cannot be diminished by physical weakness, cognitive limitation, or administrative status. The telos of human life is not an abstract pursuit of achievement, but a response to the call of Sabda. A mother who spends her life caring for a sick child may be closer to this telos than those who triumph on public stages while leaving victims behind them.

Thesis 5

The Cohesive Tetrad turns Sabda from religious slogan into a six-pillar architecture of life.

Sabda alone, without an architecture, is easily reduced to slogan. The Cohesive Tetrad stitches Sabda together with five other pillars: logic, qualia, Mistika, akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment, the degree of alignment between epistemic intention and epistemic-moral trace.

- Sabda establishes norm and telos.
- Logic guards the coherence of interpretation and policy.
- Qualia elevates lived experience as a source of knowledge.
- Mistika, the intentional-spiritual dimension of journeying toward direct encounter with the transcendent, binds intention to the horizon of encounter with God.
- Akhlak manifests as visible character in habitual conduct.
- Intention-Trace Alignment tests the fit between intention and the moral trace that remains.

In this way, Sabda-Logic becomes a way of life that can be audited, not merely a verbal confession.

Thesis 6

Democracy that privatises Sabda leaves an empty space that is quickly filled by state, market, and majority.

When religious reasons are forbidden to appear as themselves in the public sphere, democracy does not become neutral. The value-space is promptly filled by the logic of state stability, market profit, and majority comfort. The language used may remain noble: dignity, justice, freedom, but the content of these words becomes elastic because they are no longer anchored in a stable transcendent horizon. Democracy without Sabda easily turns into a neat procedure for ratifying decisions already shaped by these three forces.

Thesis 7

A healthy public reason is multi-register, not falsely neutral with respect to Sabda.

In a plural society, citizens bring reasons from many sources: Sabda, secular philosophy, science, the experience of victims. Forcing all of them into a "neutral" language makes public conversation lose honesty and depth. A healthy public reason allows Sabda to appear as Sabda, on condition that it is ready to be tested by logic, compared with the qualia of those affected, read in the light of Mistika, measured in its akhlak, and audited through Intention-Trace Alignment. This model rejects coercive theocracy, but also rejects empty secularism that expels Sabda from the discussion table.

Thesis 8

Law and artificial intelligence that operate without Sabda-Logic tend to harden injustice under a rational face.

Biased historical data, once transformed into risk models and scores, are easily treated as neutral truth. When judges, prosecutors, and policymakers hide behind the sentence "the system has been validated", they risk reproducing old inequalities in new forms. Without Sabda that affirms the dignity of both offenders and victims, without the qualia of those affected, without Mistika that reminds them of accountability before God, without akhlak that dares to resist flawed model recommendations, and without Intention-Trace Alignment that tracks long-term effects, law and artificial intelligence will tend to be more faithful to the patterns of the past than to genuine justice.

Thesis 9

The most decisive practice of Sabda-Logic takes place in small everyday decisions.

The way parents rebuke their children, the way managers draft reports, the way students choose research topics, the way a person writes comments on social media, all these are points of practice in truth governance. If at these small points Sabda is remembered, logic is used honestly, qualia is listened to, Mistika watches intention, akhlak is habituated, and Intention-Trace Alignment is kept in mind, then when the time comes to make major decisions, the inner structure is ready. Conversely, if in everyday life truth is constantly negotiated for the sake of comfort, it is unrealistic to expect that we will suddenly stand upright when entrusted with greater power.

Thesis 10

Universities and knowledge ecosystems deserve to be called houses of truth only if they submit to Sabda-Logic, not to rankings alone.

articles, citation indices, and university rankings are means, not telos. A university that gently pushes students away from themes that touch social wounds in order to protect publication safety is betraying its deepest function. If research chases only "safe" variables while ignoring the qualia of policy victims, the campus is producing knowledge that is neat but devoid of courage. A university that submits to Sabda-Logic will still honour methodology and scientific standards, but it will have the courage to focus on the weakest, to make Sabda its compass, and to allow Intention-Trace Alignment to examine the social trace of the knowledge it generates.

Thesis 11

Intention-Trace Alignment is the minimal form of moral honesty in the data age.

In an era when intentions can be polished in beautiful language and reports can be presented with impressive infographics, it is easy for institutions and individuals to claim that they work "for dignity", "for justice", "for the people". Intention-Trace Alignment forces a single simple but sharp question: after some years, what has happened to those who are most vulnerable. If social assistance programmes, legal policies, algorithm designs, campus curricula, and family habits do not yield increased safety, respect, and real opportunities for a better life, then the intentions claimed must be acknowledged as having failed. This principle binds Sabda to reality and prevents Sabda from being used as a shield to cover bad traces.

Thesis 12

The victory of Sabda in the field of logic does not mean killing logic, but restoring logic to its position as obedient instrument.

The struggle that underlies *The Cohesive Tetrad: Jalan Menuju Kebenaran* and the four journal articles is not a war to expel logic, but a war to return logic to its rightful place. The victory of Sabda in the field of logic means recognising that even the most honest logic needs a normative compass, and that this compass is not the product of logic itself. When Sabda again sits at the centre as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, logic does not disappear; it becomes nobler. It ceases to claim the throne and begins to fulfil its honourable function as guardian of clarity, rigour, and consistency in service of a higher truth.

Behind these twelve theses stands only one sentence: restore truth to the orbit of dignity under the light of Sabda.

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Section IX - Epilogue of Civilization: The Victory of Sabda in the Field of Logic

1. From journals, to tract, to praxis

The journey of *The Cohesive Tetrad* did not begin with this tract. It is rooted in a book born of a long struggle, *The Cohesive Tetrad: Jalan Menuju Kebenaran*, and then tested on the hardest terrain through four journal articles. In those articles, Sabda is brought into direct encounter with modern epistemology, theories of dignity, democratic public reason, law, and artificial intelligence. Each article works like a scalpel: cutting through illusions, exposing the weaknesses of non-Sabda foundations, and examining how pure logic collapses the moment it is asked to govern truth on its own.

This Sabda-Logic tract stands upon that scientific laboratory. It does not repeat all the technical arguments, nor re-cite every footnote, yet it never leaps outside the corpus. The task of the tract is to shift an already tested architecture from journal format into a more flowing, narrative language, closer to readers across disciplines. From journal to tract means moving from a strictly formal shape to a long essay that remains faithful to depth, but is easier to breathe for those who do not live daily inside the world.

The next step cannot stop at the tract. The entire edifice of *The Cohesive Tetrad* would lose its meaning if it remained merely as a book, articles, and thick manuscripts circulating within a narrow circle. From the beginning, its axis has never been truth in texts alone, but truth governance in life. From the tract, the Sabda-Logic architecture is called down into praxis: into policy tables, courtrooms, servers that run artificial intelligence, university classrooms, family kitchens, social media timelines, and into the bodies and souls of those who are weakest, who have most often become victims of logic without Sabda.

The journey is now complete: from book to journals, from journals to tract, from tract to praxis. This epilogue stands at the end of that sequence, not as a soothing closure, but as a marker that the main journey only truly begins once this last page has been read.

2. Sabda-Logic and the future of The Cohesive Tetrad in law, artificial intelligence, and social order

What is really at stake in the future of *The Cohesive Tetrad* is not whether it will be widely cited, turned into a standard reference, or regularly invited to conferences. What is at stake is whether the Sabda-Logic architecture will actually change the way we design institutions and systems that hold many lives in their hands.

In the legal sphere, the future of *The Cohesive Tetrad* is a future in which verdicts are no longer deemed legitimate merely because they follow procedure and align with statistical models. Sabda, as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, must be named when judges and lawmakers define what counts as just. Logic still works, examining the consistency of rules and arguments, but logic is not allowed to erase the dignity of defendants, victims, and affected communities. Their qualia - the sense of being humiliated or honoured, safe or threatened - becomes part of the evidentiary field. Mistika, the intentional-spiritual dimension of journeying toward direct encounter with the transcendent, reminds that every verdict will in

the end return to those who issue it. Akhlak demands the courage to side with the weak even when it is unpopular. Intention-Trace Alignment, the degree of alignment between epistemic intention and epistemic-moral trace, examines whether the claim "for the sake of justice" is truly reflected in the lives of those most vulnerable after the law has been in force for many years.

In the sphere of artificial intelligence, the future of *The Cohesive Tetrad* is a future in which models and algorithms are no longer treated as invisible judges. Sabda asks: may human beings be reduced to data points without any horizon of telos that honours them. Logic forces transparency: which variables are used, which historical patterns are being repeated, which biases are being reinforced. The qualia of users and of those harmed by systems are elevated as knowledge about impact: the sense of being watched, of being distrusted, of having one's path quietly blocked. Mistika calls developers to remember that the code they write is part of their journey towards God. Akhlak appears when technology firms and state institutions have the courage to refuse projects that clearly degrade dignity, even when they are extremely profitable. Intention-Trace Alignment audits the slogan "AI for humanity", not at the level of branding, but at the level of statistical traces of suffering and restoration.

In the wider social order, the future of *The Cohesive Tetrad* is a future where democracy stops forcing Sabda into hiding. The proposed multi-register public reason no longer demands that everyone speak in seemingly neutral language that in fact quietly submits to the logics of state, market, or majority. Citizens may state that their commitments spring from Sabda, on condition that they are willing to be tested by logic, by the experience of victims, by the horizon of Mistika, by akhlak, and by the moral traces that remain. In such a space, Sabda is not a club for beating opponents, but a source of courage to correct oneself and structures from which one benefits.

The Cohesive Tetrad does not offer a neat utopia. It offers an architecture that is harsh on itself before it is harsh on others. It forces every normative claim to pass through six gates: Sabda, logic, qualia, Mistika, akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment. If even one gate is deliberately bypassed, then the edifice of truth built on top of it will be skewed, however majestic it appears.

3. A brief manifesto: what must change, what must be guarded, and the role of The Cohesive Tetrad ahead

This epilogue must also function as a kind of manifesto, not in the sense of grand slogans, but as a sober affirmation: what must be changed, what must be guarded, and what role *The Cohesive Tetrad* should play going forward.

First, what must be changed.

There are three entrenched habits which, if left uncorrected, will go on damaging truth governance.

1. **The habit of absolutising logic and data as if they could replace the normative compass.**
   This must stop. Logic and data must be returned to their place as highly valuable tools, but not as setters of telos.

2. **The habit of privatising Sabda so that it only dares speak in places of worship, but remains silent in courtrooms, meeting rooms, and server rooms.**
   This must be corrected. Sabda has the right to be present in public conversation, in a responsible way, ready to be tested and to give account.
3. **The habit of measuring institutional success only through technical indicators while ignoring the qualia of those who are weakest.**
   This must be replaced by a culture that constantly asks: what does it feel like to live under the policies and systems we build.

Second, what must be guarded.

There are three things that cannot be sacrificed as we attempt to repair our orders.

1. **The dignity of the weakest human beings.**

   They are the most honest touchstone of any system. If children who cannot speak, residents of care homes, victims of eviction, and undocumented citizens feel increasingly pressed, then all talk of truth and justice is losing its centre.

2. **Intellectual honesty.**

   The Cohesive Tetrad is born from a struggle that does not flatter itself. It reads Rawls, Habermas, Kittay, Nussbaum, contract theory, evolutionary theory, and the wider modern tradition with both respect and critique. This attitude must be guarded: the courage to correct, and at the same time the courage to acknowledge the contributions of those who differ.

3. **Humility before mystery.**

   Sabda calls humans into a realm that can never be fully locked down by definitions and models. Mistika reminds us of the gap between what we design and what God wills. This humility must remain alive, lest *The Cohesive Tetrad* itself harden into a rigid dogma that repeats the very errors it set out to expose, only in a new guise.

Third, the role of The Cohesive Tetrad ahead.

Its role is not to become a new religion, a new ideology, or a new brand. Its role is simpler and heavier at once: to serve as an open architecture for constructing, auditing, and correcting truth governance across domains.

- In law, *The Cohesive Tetrad* can be used as a moral and epistemic audit framework for decisions.
- In artificial intelligence, it can function as an evaluation protocol that binds intention, model, and impact.
- In universities, it can serve as a mirror to assess whether research and curriculum genuinely serve truth and dignity.
- In public policy, it can act as a map to ensure that the weakest are always counted in, not treated as residual numbers.

- In everyday life, it can become a rule of sensibility that helps parents, teachers, community leaders, and ordinary workers make small decisions with the awareness that every decision leaves a trace.

If all this sounds weighty, it probably is. That is precisely why *The Cohesive Tetrad* must not be treated as a passing intellectual fashion. It will only mean something if it is lived patiently, slowly, and consistently, beginning from the smallest spaces.

At this point, this brief civilizational epilogue reaches its final knot. The victory of Sabda in the field of logic is not a declaration that the battle is over. It is an admission that we have seen enough of the damage inflicted when logic is forced to rule alone, and that we have rediscovered a compass worthy to lead: Sabda, which calls logic back into service, invites qualia to speak, kindles Mistika in intention, shapes akhlak in habit, and binds all of them through Intention-Trace Alignment so that the traces we leave on this earth are aligned with the truth we profess with our lips and in our scholarly work.

Civilization does not collapse when machines begin to think, but when humans no longer feel the need to answer for their thinking before Sabda.

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Conclusion

In the end, the entire journey of *The Cohesive Tetrad: Tract on Human Dignity and Law in the Data Era* converges on one question that is at once simple and weighty: in an age in which truth is measured by statistics and human beings are compressed into data, do we still dare to place dignity at the centre and Sabda as the highest normative source. All the analysis unfolded earlier-from the dissection of the foundations of dignity, the critique of capacity, evolution, and social contract, to the examination of law as it intersects with data infrastructures and artificial intelligence-has in fact only been an attempt to answer this question from multiple angles.

The Cohesive Tetrad framework insists that Sabda must be understood as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, not as decoration at the margins of argument. Without Sabda, human dignity is easily ensnared in formulas that keep changing, depending on whatever theory or market currently finds important. With Sabda, dignity once more becomes a non-negotiable declaration, the starting point that precedes any calculation. On that foundation, logic is summoned to work honestly to safeguard the coherence of law, not to whitewash manipulation. Qualia reminds us that the sense of being humiliated, the sense of safety, and the sense of being trusted are part of the landscape of truth that must never be erased. Mistika, the intentional-spiritual dimension of journeying toward direct encounter with the transcendent, draws this entire process back into the horizon of accountability before God. Akhlak ensures that all of this is visible in habits that can be seen. Intention-Trace Alignment, the degree of alignment between epistemic intention and epistemic-moral trace, forces us to read the historical trace of law in the data era and to ask honestly whether noble intentions have truly been realised in the lives of those who are weakest.

From this vantage point, law in the data era can no longer be understood merely as a mechanism for regulating behaviour. It must be read as one of the hardest nodes of truth governance, where claims to truth are translated into decisions, procedures, and sanctions. When legal instruments lean on skewed databases, on statistical models that photocopy past bias, or on risk scores that never look into the human face, then law risks becoming a tool for multiplying injustice in a tidy form. This tract proposes that the only valid way out is not to abandon technology, but to bring the entire architecture of data and algorithms under the orbit of Sabda, honest logic, and a consistent audit through Intention-Trace Alignment.

Of course, this text is not the final answer. It is one knot in a longer chain. Above it stands the foundational book *The Cohesive Tetrad: Jalan Menuju Kebenaran* as the source of the architecture, and beneath it lies open space for further derivative works that will address social, political, economic, educational, and cultural dimensions in greater detail. Yet this tract has sought to lock in one message: if, in the realm of law and the data era, Sabda is left silent, then logic, data, and algorithms will write their own history without correction. If, in this very realm, Sabda is once again given the right to speak and is placed at the centre of the architecture, then law may still become an instrument of the restoration of dignity, not merely a tool for risk management.

For that reason, this conclusion is not meant as a final full stop, but as an invitation. An invitation to judges, legislators, academics, system developers, and concerned citizens to reread legal practice in the data era through the lens of The Cohesive Tetrad. An invitation to researchers and students to make this framework one of their interpretive tools in theses, dissertations, and policy research. An invitation to communities that have long been the objects

of legal decisions to recognise that their voices and experiences-their qualia-are a legitimate part of the moral knowledge that must be heard.

If there is anything to be hoped for from this tract, that hope is simple: that after closing the last page, readers will not only carry additional concepts, but also a different way of feeling and of weighing. Feeling that something is wrong when data runs smoothly but the most vulnerable remain wounded. Weighing that dignity must never be pawned in the name of efficiency. And above all, realising that in every decision about law in the data era, we are in fact standing at the meeting point between Sabda and logic, between intention and trace, between claims to truth and the fate of human beings who live under them. From that meeting point, a more just civilisation may begin to be rebuilt.

If, after reading this tract, we are only more skilful at arguing but no more afraid of wounding dignity, then we have not truly listened to Sabda.

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Appendices: Journal Corpus for Treatise 1 - Editorial Note

The four journal articles collected in these appendices form the primary corpus from which Treatise 1 on the Logic of Sabda has grown. Each of them was first conceived and written as a standalone journal manuscript, with its own internal structure, abstract, and bibliography. They have been, or are being, shared individually through open access repositories and scholarly platforms, where they can be read, cited, and reviewed on their own terms.

Bringing them together here does not change their status as independent research works. Rather, it allows readers to see how they are interwoven in the background of this treatise. Treatise 1 offers an integrated arc that moves from the age of data and the throne of pure logic to the Twelve Theses of Sabda logic and a civilizational epilogue. The four articles approach the same architecture from different angles. The first article clarifies why pure logic cannot govern truth on its own and why truth governance requires Sabda. The second article explores human dignity and telos beyond capacities, evolution, and social contract as ultimate grounds. The third article considers plural societies, public reason, and democratic truth governance. The fourth article applies The Cohesive Tetrad to law, institutional practice, and artificial intelligence.

The versions reproduced here prioritise the main argumentative content. In order to keep the focus on the architecture and avoid unnecessary repetition, detailed reference lists are not presented in full. Readers who wish to follow every citation, examine the broader literatures, or refer to stable identifiers and metadata are encouraged to consult the standalone versions of these manuscripts on the relevant repositories and platforms where they have been deposited.

Both the treatise and the journal corpus are offered as provisional efforts, not as final words. They stand in debt to many streams of thought and practice, and they remain open to correction, refinement, and deepening. If these pages can modestly help to protect human dignity in the age of data and to clarify the place of Sabda and logic in truth governance, they will have served the purpose for which they were written.

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Sabda, Pure Logic, and the Architecture of Truth Governance: Why Logic Cannot Rule Alone and Why Truth Governance Requires Sabda

Abstract

This article argues that contemporary claims about the sovereignty of pure logic in science, law, and technology cannot be sustained once their internal structure is made explicit. Building on the genealogy from positivism to contemporary scientism, I reconstruct pure logic as an architecture defined by four structural theses: scientism, hard evidentialism, strict fact value separation, and naturalistic accounts of telos and human dignity. I then show that this architecture faces three structural failures. First, the basic norms of rational practice, such as honesty, openness to criticism, and orientation to truth, cannot be grounded by the very procedures they make possible without regress, circularity, or stipulation. Second, the strict fact value distinction collapses under scrutiny of real practices of inquiry and decision, where value judgements and thick concepts such as cruelty, corruption, and degrading treatment are embedded in problem choice, concept formation, and standards of evidence. Third, capacity based, evolutionary, and contractarian accounts of dignity and telos do not justify the unconditional language of inherent, inalienable worth and inviolable constraints that legal and ethical frameworks continue to employ. To respond, the article proposes The Cohesive Tetrad (TCT) as an alternative architecture of truth governance. In this architecture, Sabda, understood as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, is primary, while logic, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment are assigned distinct yet interdependent roles. I indicate how this architecture can reframe debates about rationality, human dignity, and institutional design in law and artificial intelligence, and argue that it provides a more coherent account of the norms that contemporary regimes of truth already presuppose.

Keywords: *truth governance; human dignity; Sabda; logic; legal rationality; artificial intelligence governance; Qualia; Mistika; Akhlak; Intention-Trace Alignment; The Cohesive Tetrad.*

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1. Introduction

1.1 Rational authority, dignity, and an unseen dependence

Modern institutions speak with two voices. In the first voice, they present themselves as governed by evidence, neutrality, and formal procedures. Scientific communities describe their authority in terms of method and peer review. Courts and regulatory bodies ground their legitimacy in reasoning from facts and law. Technical communities frame their work as the design of value neutral tools that can serve any reasonable end (Haack, 2003; Douglas, 2009; Rea, 2018). This voice suggests that pure logic, coupled with empirical investigation, is sufficient to govern rational practice in plural societies.

In the second voice, the same institutions rely on a vocabulary of human dignity, basic rights, inviolable constraints, and non negotiable goods. Human rights instruments affirm the inherent and inalienable dignity of every person (UN, 1948; Waldron, 2012). Medical and research ethics insist that persons must never be treated merely as means, even when doing so would produce significant benefits (Kant, 1996; Beauchamp and Childress, 2019). Courts deploy concepts such as degrading treatment, discrimination, and equal protection that go beyond mere efficiency or preference. Debates about artificial intelligence now routinely appeal to fairness, accountability, transparency, and respect for human dignity as guiding principles (Jobin, Ienca, and Vayena, 2019; OECD, 2019; UNESCO, 2021).

Taken separately, each voice has its own plausibility. Together, they generate a tension. If rational authority is grounded solely in procedures that satisfy the demands of pure logic, it is not obvious how the unconditional tone of dignitarian language can be justified. If dignity and telos are more than pragmatic summaries of successful coordination, then pure logic, operating within a naturalistic horizon, seems to be silently relying on a source of norm and purpose that it does not acknowledge. This article makes that tension explicit and argues that it cannot be resolved without reconfiguring the underlying architecture of truth governance.

1.2 From techniques to architecture: reconstructing pure logic

The first step is to move from viewing logic as a set of techniques to viewing it as part of an architecture. By architecture of truth governance I mean a pattern of assumptions about what counts as knowledge, how reasons should be weighed, and where normative authority is located. Pure logic, in the sense relevant here, is not simply deductive validity or probabilistic coherence. It is an ensemble of commitments that has emerged historically from positivism, empiricism, and various forms of naturalism, and that now shapes how institutions understand themselves.

Drawing on this genealogy, I reconstruct pure logic as organised by four structural theses. The first is scientism, the view that the natural sciences are the most, and perhaps the only, serious route to knowledge about reality, and that other domains produce at best expression or interpretation (Stenmark, 2001; Haack, 2003). The second is hard evidentialism, according to which beliefs are rationally acceptable only if they are supported by evidence that is, in principle, accessible and assessable by any competent inquirer (Clifford, 1877; Conee and Feldman, 2004). The third is a strict fact value separation that assigns facts to science and values to politics, culture, or private conviction (Hume, 1978; Putnam, 2002). The fourth is a naturalistic account of telos and dignity, which seeks to interpret these notions in terms of

capacities, evolutionary histories, or rational agreements, without appeal to any higher order norm (Rawls, 1999; Nussbaum, 2006; Waldron, 2012).

These theses are not always explicitly stated, nor do all defenders of rationality endorse them in identical form. Yet, taken together, they describe a recognisable picture that informs how many contemporary actors speak about evidence, neutrality, and public reason. Section 2 develops this reconstruction in more detail, showing how these commitments cohere and why they appear attractive as a way of protecting inquiry from dogma and public life from sectarian conflict.

1.3 Three structural failures of pure logic

Once pure logic is treated as an architecture rather than a loose collection of virtues, it becomes possible to ask whether this architecture can meet the demands it places on itself. The central claim of the article is that it cannot. Three structural failures are especially important.

The first concerns self grounding. Pure logic depends on basic norms of rational practice, including obligations to avoid deception, to respect evidence, and to remain open to correction. Yet when it attempts to justify these norms using only its own resources, it encounters a familiar trilemma: regress, circularity, or stipulation (BonJour, 1985; Klein, 1998). Either each norm must be backed by a further norm without end, or practices must be justified by their success in ways that already presuppose the contested norms, or some norms must simply be declared basic. Debates in virtue epistemology reinforce the point that character traits such as intellectual honesty and love of truth are not derivable from neutral procedures, but are preconditions of serious inquiry (Zagzebski, 1996; Baehr, 2011; Roberts and Wood, 2007). Section 3 argues that pure logic cannot, on its own terms, supply the kind of grounding it implicitly promises.

The second failure concerns the fact value distinction. Philosophers of science and social epistemologists have shown that values enter into research at multiple levels, from problem selection to concept specification and standards of evidence (Putnam, 2002; Anderson, 2004; Douglas, 2009). Thick concepts such as cruelty, corruption, and degrading treatment, which are central in law and ethics, fuse description and evaluation in ways that resist separation (Williams, 1985; MacIntyre, 1988). Section 4 argues that normativity is not an optional add on, but is submerged in the very practices that pure logic describes as factual and value free.

The third failure concerns dignity and telos. Capacity based, evolutionary, and contractarian accounts capture important aspects of our moral life, but none sustains the strong claims about inherent, inalienable dignity and inviolable constraints that human rights language and many legal decisions make (Kant, 1996; Rawls, 1999; Nussbaum, 2006; Waldron, 2012). When examined closely, these accounts tend to relativise or weaken the axioms they seek to justify. Section 5 articulates a set of minimal human dignity axioms already implicit in practice and shows that they point beyond a purely naturalistic horizon.

1.4 Sabda and The Cohesive Tetrad

If the norms of rational practice and the minimal axioms of human dignity are more than local conventions, then there must be some source that grounds them and addresses rational agents with binding force. In this article, I name that source Sabda, understood as Revelatory Word,

the authoritative source of norm and telos. To invoke Sabda is to claim that human beings are not accidental bearers of a taste for truth and justice, but creatures called and known by a reality that precedes and exceeds them. It is to affirm that there are ways of treating persons that are unfitting in themselves, not merely suboptimal relative to changing goals.

The introduction of Sabda is not meant to shut down questions. On the contrary, it sets the stage for a more complex architecture in which logic is relieved of the impossible task of grounding itself, but is still charged with testing human responses to Sabda for coherence and honesty. The Cohesive Tetrad (TCT) is the name I give to that architecture. Alongside Sabda and logic, it recognises Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment as distinct domains of truth that must be integrated into any responsible regime of knowledge.

Section 6 presents this architecture in detail. Sabda occupies the apex as the source of norm and telos. Logic serves as a disciplined organ of clarification and critique. Qualia captures how institutional arrangements are experienced from within. Mistika, the intentional spiritual dimension of journeying toward direct encounter with the transcendent, concerns the orientation of epistemic intention. Akhlak describes the moral configuration of knowers. Intention-Trace Alignment measures the degree of alignment between epistemic intention and epistemic moral trace in institutional practice. Section 6 also sketches how this architecture can be used to re read debates in law and artificial intelligence, domains in which the limits of pure logic and the urgency of dignitarian concerns are especially visible (Habermas, 1996; Dworkin, 1986; Fricker, 2007; Medina, 2013; Jobin, Ienca, and Vayena, 2019; UNESCO, 2021).

The final section draws together the critique of pure logic and the proposal of The Cohesive Tetrad, and indicates how an explicit acknowledgment of Sabda can coexist with, and indeed strengthen, rigorous logical and empirical practice in institutions that aspire to honour both truth and human dignity.

2. Reconstructing the ideology of pure logic

If the critique developed in this article is to be fair, it cannot begin from a caricature. Pure logic must first be presented in the strongest form it can reasonably claim. Only then can its limits be exposed without injustice. This section therefore reconstructs the ideology of pure logic as a serious, internally coherent project that emerges from a recognisable intellectual genealogy and that continues to shape the self understanding of contemporary institutions.

I use the term ideology here in a descriptive sense. The point is not to accuse advocates of bad faith, but to highlight that pure logic functions as an architecture of assumptions about what counts as knowledge, how reasons should be weighed, and where authority is located. Much of what this ideology affirms is real achievement. Precisely for that reason, the question of its boundaries matters.

2.1 Genealogy and self understanding of pure logic

The aspiration that I call pure logic stands in continuity with several major currents in modern thought. Early positivists such as Auguste Comte argued that humanity should outgrow theological and metaphysical stages and enter a positive stage in which genuine knowledge is grounded in observation and lawlike regularities rather than revelation or speculation (Comte, 1974). Logical positivists radicalised this impulse by tying cognitive meaning tightly to

verification or formal relations among propositions, rendering many traditional metaphysical and theological claims literally meaningless rather than simply false (Ayer, 1936; Carnap, 1937).

Although classical logical positivism lost much of its dominance after mid century, its central intuition survived in more flexible forms of empiricism and naturalism. Scientism, in particular, can be understood as a descendant of positivism that no longer insists on a strict verification principle, but still treats the natural sciences as the most, and perhaps the only, serious way of knowing reality (Stenmark, 2001; Haack, 2003). Claims that cannot be integrated into a broadly scientific picture are relegated to the domains of preference, upbringing, or identity.

At the same time, analytic philosophy of language and mind developed increasingly sophisticated accounts of meaning, reference, and rationality that often strengthened, rather than weakened, the attraction of a broadly scientistic outlook. Naturalistic metaphysics sought to build ontologies that did not go beyond what well established science seemed to require (Rea, 2018). In many quarters, talk of revelation, sacred command, and transcendent norm came to be treated as, at best, symbolic ways of gesturing toward human concerns that might eventually be redescribed in naturalistic terms.

This philosophical background feeds directly into contemporary institutional self descriptions. Scientific organisations describe their work as evidence based and methodologically neutral with respect to ultimate values. Courts and regulatory bodies portray themselves as constrained by facts and law, rather than by the convictions of particular communities. Technical communities speak of value free tools that can serve any reasonable goal. Even critical engagements with these institutions often share the underlying assumption that what ultimately matters is whether evidence and logic have been properly respected.

Of course, no scientist or judge operates with a full set of positivist theses in mind. Most would reject the stronger claims of early verificationism. Yet a common image of rational authority persists. On this image, genuine knowledge is the product of methods that are public, empirical, and logically disciplined. Normative and metaphysical commitments may play a role in individual motivation, but they do not count as knowledge in the same hard sense. In this way, pure logic functions as a regulative ideal that shapes which arguments appear intellectually legitimate and which are set aside as private or sectarian.

Seen from within this genealogy, pure logic is not an arbitrary preference. It is a historically understandable attempt to protect inquiry from dogmatic abuse, to ensure that authority submits to scrutiny, and to create a shared space in which people of different convictions can reason together. Any alternative architecture of truth governance that ignores these motives would be irresponsible. The task is to see where this ideal clarifies and where it overreaches.

2.2 Four structural theses of pure logic

Beneath the diversity of positions that appeal to pure logic, it is possible to discern a family of structural theses that tend to travel together. They are not always explicitly formulated, but they can be extracted from how rationality, evidence, and authority are described. For the purposes of this article, four such theses are central.

The first is scientism. In its strong form, scientism claims that the natural sciences are the most, and perhaps the only, authoritative path to knowledge about reality (Stenmark, 2001). Other domains, such as ethics, theology, or aesthetics, may provide meaning or expression, but they do not generate knowledge in the same robust sense. In weaker forms, scientism treats scientific methods as the default model for all serious inquiry, even where they must be adapted. In both versions, what counts as real is closely tied to what can be investigated with the concepts and instruments of the sciences (Haack, 2003; Rea, 2018).

The second thesis is hard evidentialism. In its classic slogan, associated with W. K. Clifford, it is wrong to believe anything upon insufficient evidence (Clifford, 1877). Contemporary evidentialists often refine this into the claim that a belief is epistemically justified only if it is supported by the total available evidence, understood in terms that are, in principle, intersubjectively accessible and open to assessment by others (Conee and Feldman, 2004). While few would deny that evidence matters, hard evidentialism goes further by treating appeals to revelation, tradition, or authority as epistemically suspect unless they can be translated into evidential terms that satisfy its standards.

The third thesis is a strict separation of facts and values. On this view, facts describe how the world is, while values express how the world ought to be or what is worth pursuing. Facts, it is said, are the rightful domain of science and can be investigated independent of any particular value commitments. Values arise from preferences, emotions, or social conventions and must therefore be handled by politics, culture, or private choice. This sharp division has been influential at least since Hume's famous distinction between is and ought, and it continues to shape how public discourse is organised (Hume, 1978; Putnam, 2002). For the ideology of pure logic, the advantage is clear. By restricting rational authority to factual questions, it becomes possible to claim neutrality among competing value systems.

The fourth thesis is a naturalistic account of telos and dignity. When pure logic cannot avoid speaking of ends and worth, it tries to reinterpret these in ways that fit an immanent, naturalistic picture of the world. Telos, or purpose, is recast as an emergent pattern in evolutionary processes, as the output of rational choice under constraints, or as a product of social contracts among free and equal agents (Rawls, 1999; Habermas, 1996). Human dignity is reinterpreted as a shorthand for a set of socially useful protections that support cooperation and long term stability, or as a culturally entrenched commitment whose authority derives from shared history rather than from any higher order norm (Waldron, 2012; Nussbaum, 2006). On such views, language of inherent and inalienable dignity in human rights instruments is retained, but the metaphysical weight is displaced onto evolutionary narratives, contractual models, or functionalist accounts.

These four theses are conceptually distinct, yet they reinforce one another. Scientism and hard evidentialism encourage a strict fact value separation, because only what can be brought under evidential criteria counts as fully rational. The fact value separation, in turn, puts pressure on accounts of telos and dignity to be naturalistic, since any appeal to a higher order norm would violate the declared boundary. Once telos and dignity are naturalised, scientism appears further vindicated, since there is nothing left outside the space that scientific and quasi scientific methods can, in principle, survey.

In practice, many philosophers and practitioners hold softened or hybrid versions of these theses. Some defend moderate scientism while rejecting hard evidentialism. Others critique the fact value dichotomy while still affirming some form of naturalism about normativity (Putnam,

2002). The point here is not to collapse all positions into one slogan, but to identify a configuration that is recognisable in the self understanding of institutions that regard themselves as primarily governed by pure logic. It is that configuration, rather than any single thesis, that this article treats as an architecture of truth governance.

2.3 Pure logic as an architecture of truth governance

Once these structural theses are in place, pure logic becomes more than an epistemic virtue. It functions as an architecture that orders questions, allocates authority, and shapes the implicit anthropology of institutions.

In terms of ordering questions, the fact value separation encourages a two tier model. First, factual questions are settled by science, expert analysis, or other evidence based procedures. Only after the facts are in does it become appropriate to ask what ought to be done. In many policy and legal contexts, this is reflected in a sequential rhetoric. Experts are charged with discovering what is, while elected officials or stakeholders are asked to deliberate about values. Logic is presented as the arbiter at both stages, ensuring that conclusions follow from facts at the first level and from stated goals at the second (Douglas, 2009; Anderson, 2004).

In terms of allocation of authority, scientism and hard evidentialism push institutions to frame their legitimacy in terms of procedures rather than persons or texts. Scientific communities, courts, regulatory agencies, and even technical standard setting bodies depict themselves as servants of impersonal methods. Public trust is sought by emphasising adherence to protocols of data collection, peer review, and legal reasoning, rather than by invoking wisdom, character, or revelation. Appeals to Sabda, understood as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, are treated as private motivations that may be respected but cannot count as public reasons in Habermasian public reason or Rawlsian overlapping consensus (Rawls, 1999; Habermas, 1996).

In terms of anthropology, the architecture of pure logic tends to view human beings primarily as bearers of cognitive capacities and interests. Individuals are agents who form beliefs, update credences, maximise utilities, and negotiate agreements. Their moral and spiritual dimensions, if acknowledged, are recast as psychological factors that may influence behaviour. Human beings are to be protected insofar as such protection is required by stable cooperation, by rational agreement under fair conditions, or by empirical evidence about well being (Dworkin, 1986; Nussbaum, 2006). When human dignity is invoked in law and policy, it is often interpreted in this light, as a high level summary of functional reasons rather than as a direct response to Sabda.

This architecture does real work. In philosophy of science, it encourages a focus on demarcation criteria and on the regulation of values within inquiry, rather than on questions of ultimate purpose (Douglas, 2009; Putnam, 2002). In law, it supports proceduralist visions of legitimacy in which fidelity to rules and fairness of process are paramount (Habermas, 1996; Dworkin, 1986). In technology governance, especially in the ethics of artificial intelligence, it underlies attempts to define fairness, accountability, and transparency in terms that minimise dependence on particular ethical or religious traditions (Jobin, Ienca, and Vayena, 2019; OECD, 2019; UNESCO, 2021).

For many practitioners, this configuration has the moral advantage of appearing less dangerous than alternatives. It seems to offer a way of living together in plural societies without needing to agree on ultimate things. It promises to restrain authoritarian appeals to revelation and to discipline the use of power through publicly inspectable procedures. This is why pure logic is often experienced as a protective force and why criticism of it can look, at first sight, like a threat to hard won gains.

The question pursued in the remainder of this article is whether this architecture can deliver what it implicitly promises. Can it justify the norms that define rational practice without appealing to any higher source of norm and telos. Can it maintain a robust distinction between facts and values in actual contexts of inquiry and decision. Can it ground the strong claims about human dignity and inviolable constraints that legal and ethical frameworks continue to affirm. Or does it, despite avowed neutrality, depend on an order of reality that it does not acknowledge. Later sections will argue that the latter is the case, and that any sustainable regime of truth governance will need an architecture more like that proposed by The Cohesive Tetrad, in which Sabda and logic are integrated rather than opposed.

3. The regress of justification and the limits of self grounding

If pure logic is to function as a sovereign architecture of truth governance, it must do more than offer useful tools. It must be able to justify the basic norms that define rational practice. Otherwise, its claim to epistemic authority will rest on habits that it cannot defend by its own standards. The core question is simple to state but difficult to answer: can the very norms that make rational inquiry possible be grounded by the procedures that they themselves enable.

This section argues that, taken on its own terms, pure logic cannot resolve this question. When it attempts to justify its basic norms, it faces a familiar trilemma. Either it launches into an infinite regress of ever more basic reasons, or it moves in a circle that presupposes what it seeks to prove, or it stops with stipulations that simply declare certain norms basic. Debates in epistemology about the regress problem show that some form of basic commitment is unavoidable (BonJour, 1985; Klein, 1998; Audi, 1993). What is distinctive in the present context is that the commitments in question concern not particular beliefs about the world, but the very norms of honesty, openness, and responsiveness to evidence that make the practice of inquiry possible. Once this is seen, the architecture of pure logic begins to look less self sufficient than it appears in its own rhetoric.

3.1 Basic norms in rational practice

Every concrete practice of reasoning already rests on norms that are not the result of that particular piece of reasoning. Scientists rely on more than instruments and equations. They assume that fraud is wrong, that selective use of data is intellectually vicious, that serious objections deserve an answer, and that criticism is not an insult but a necessary discipline. Judges and lawyers rely on more than statutes and precedents. They assume that like cases should be treated alike, that parties should be heard, and that manipulation of evidence is incompatible with the vocation of law.

These norms are not optional ideals that decorate an essentially neutral practice. They are constitutive of what it means to take truth seriously. Without them, reasoning may continue in a purely technical sense, but it ceases to be inquiry in the full sense that epistemologists and

philosophers of science have in view when they speak of knowledge and understanding (Zagzebski, 1996; Roberts and Wood, 2007).

Virtue epistemologists have argued that intellectual character traits such as honesty, intellectual courage, and love of truth are not external moral additions to an otherwise self sufficient rational procedure, but internal to the very practice of good reasoning (Zagzebski, 1996; Baehr, 2011). If a community abandons these traits, its methods may remain in place, but their authority is hollow. The point can be expressed in procedural language, yet the substance remains the same. Rationality requires a set of practical and dispositional commitments that cannot be reduced to formal relations between propositions.

From the standpoint of pure logic, however, these commitments must themselves be open to the demand for justification. If only what can be shown by evidence and argument counts as rationally obligatory, then the obligation to tell the truth, to avoid self deception, and to submit to criticism should, in principle, be supportable by further reasons. To say that these norms are simply obvious or self evident may be psychologically accurate for many agents, but this answer sits uneasily with the hard evidentialism that often accompanies the ideology of pure logic (Clifford, 1877; Conee and Feldman, 2004).

The result is a tension. Pure logic depends on basic norms of rational practice, yet its own standards seem to forbid accepting such norms without reasons of the right kind. The next subsection considers three strategies for resolving this tension and argues that each fails to secure the kind of self grounding that pure logic implicitly promises.

3.2 Regress, circularity, and stipulation

The first strategy is to accept an infinite regress of justification. On this view, every norm can and should be backed by a more basic norm. The obligation to report data honestly is justified by a more general obligation to avoid deception. That obligation is justified by a still more basic commitment to respect persons, and so on without end. In principle, there is always a deeper reason to be sought.

Epistemologists have long noted that a regress of this kind is not, by itself, a refutation of rationality, but it raises serious concerns about closure and livability (BonJour, 1985; Klein, 1998). In practical terms, no inquirer can actually trace such a chain to infinity. In architectural terms, a system that never reaches a level at which reasons bottom out in something other than further reasons risks undermining its own authority. If pure logic insists that no norm may be treated as binding unless it is supported by an actually articulated chain of reasons, it makes the practice of inquiry impossible. If it relaxes that demand in daily life, then it already concedes that some norms must be treated as basic in another sense.

The second strategy is to embrace a form of circularity. Here, the norms of rational practice are said to be justified by the success of the practices they sustain. The argument takes a familiar form. Because methods that value evidence, honesty, and openness to criticism have produced reliable knowledge and technological power, we have good reason to trust the norms that guide them. The practice validates its own rules by its fruits.

This line has intuitive appeal, and pragmatist epistemology has developed sophisticated versions of it (Dewey, 1938; Putnam, 2002). Yet if pure logic takes its own standards seriously,

the circle is problematic. The assessment of what counts as success, of which practices are genuinely reliable, and of which fruits matter is itself guided by the very norms under scrutiny. Without a prior commitment to truth as a genuine good, to the intelligibility of the world, and to the moral unacceptability of deception, the raw fact that certain procedures produce predictions or control is open to very different interpretations, including purely instrumental ones that sever success from truth (Rea, 2018). The circularity can be virtuous in a modest, reflective equilibrium sense (Rawls, 1999), but it does not supply the kind of linear justification that hard evidentialism seems to demand.

The third strategy is stipulation. Here, the defender of pure logic declares that certain norms simply define what it means to reason. To refuse honesty, coherence, or responsiveness to evidence is to step outside the community of rational agents. In contemporary epistemology, this move appears in talk of basic or hinge commitments that are not themselves the products of inference, but are presupposed by any attempt to doubt or reason at all (Wittgenstein, 1969; Pritchard, 2016). In this register, one might say that the obligation to avoid self contradiction or to care about truth is not up for argument. It is constitutive.

There is an important insight here. Many attempts to justify basic norms by appeal to more basic reasons are confused, because the very act of seeking reasons already presupposes those norms. However, if the ideology of pure logic admits this, it must also acknowledge that its own standards of justification have limits. At least some norms are accepted not because they meet evidential criteria in the way ordinary empirical claims do, but because they belong to the form of life within which such criteria make sense. Once this is admitted, the picture of pure logic as a self grounded architecture of rationality begins to dissolve.

The trilemma is not a trick of words. It records a structural difficulty. Either pure logic demands justification of every norm and thereby destroys its own conditions of possibility, or it accepts some norms as basic and admits that its own methods do not explain why these norms should bind. The appeal to infinite regress, to practical success, or to stipulation each softens the blow in different ways, but none delivers the strong form of self grounding that a sovereign architecture of rationality would require.

3.3 Trust, intelligibility, and the first appearance of Sabda

A different approach is to step back from the demand that every commitment be backed by further reasons. Several twentieth century philosophers suggested that rational practice rests on a bedrock of trust or faith that is not irrational, but also not the product of argument in the usual sense (Wittgenstein, 1969; Polanyi, 1958; Zagzebski, 2012). To inquire at all is to live as if the world is intelligible, as if truth is a genuine good, as if others are potential knowers rather than mere obstacles, and as if self deception is a betrayal of something more than personal preference.

These are not empirical hypotheses about how the world happens to behave. They shape what counts as evidence and how evidence is to be interpreted in the first place. They are not optional for anyone who seriously wishes to know. Even the most deflationary accounts of rationality must presuppose some orienting trust of this kind, or else rationality collapses into a purely instrumental game of manipulation.

From within the framework of pure logic, such trust can be acknowledged descriptively. It can be described as a psychological or cultural precondition of inquiry, perhaps explained by evolutionary or social mechanisms that favour cooperation and shared standards (Kitcher, 1993; Sterelny, 2012). Yet this kind of explanation changes the subject. It tells a story about how certain dispositions might arise and spread. It does not address the normative question of whether they are appropriate responses to the way things really are.

The argument of this article is that at this point a different vocabulary becomes necessary. The basic trusts that sustain rational practice are better understood as responses to a call than as fortunate habits. They disclose, however imperfectly, that reality is not indifferent to truth and that human beings are not random bearers of an inexplicable urge to know. They hint that the world is ordered in such a way that seeking truth and respecting persons is not merely locally useful, but fitting.

The name Sabda, understood as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, is offered as a way of marking this dimension. At this stage, the claim is modest in scope but strong in implication. If the norms of rational practice and the minimal axioms of human dignity are more than local conventions, then there must be some source that both grounds and addresses them. Pure logic, bound to its own naturalistic and evidential constraints, cannot credibly occupy that role. It cannot be both the creature of these norms and their ultimate creator.

Recognising this does not require abandoning logic or weakening standards of argument. On the contrary, it clarifies the conditions under which logic can function as logic. Once the dependence of rational practice on a deeper source of norm and telos is acknowledged, the burden on pure logic is lightened. Logic need no longer attempt to pull itself up by its own bootstraps. It can operate as a disciplined organ of critique and clarification within a wider architecture.

The next section takes up another pillar of the ideology of pure logic, the separation of facts and values, and shows how, even there, submerged normativity points beyond the self description of pure logic. When the boundary between what is and what ought to be is examined in concrete institutional settings, it turns out to be far more porous than the ideology admits. This, too, will prepare the way for the more explicit role of Sabda and for the alternative architecture proposed later in the article.

4. Facts, values, and submerged normativity

The ideology of pure logic relies heavily on a confident distinction between facts and values. Facts describe how the world is. Values express how the world ought to be or what is worth pursuing. On this picture, science and other evidence based practices handle facts, while questions about ends and priorities are left to politics, culture, or private conviction. The conceptual appeal of this division is easy to see. It seems to protect inquiry from moral and religious controversy, and to protect citizens from the imposition of comprehensive doctrines in public life.

This section argues that the strict fact value separation required by pure logic cannot be sustained in actual practices of inquiry and decision. Once we examine how research agendas are set, how legal and policy concepts function, and how institutions speak about dignity and

harm, it becomes apparent that normativity is not an optional overlay. It is present in the selection of facts, in the language of description, and in the standards of adequacy. Rather than a clean boundary, we find what Hilary Putnam calls an entanglement of fact and value at multiple levels of cognition and practice (Putnam, 2002). I describe this entanglement under three headings: the porous boundary between fact and value in practice, the role of thick concepts and hybrid vocabulary, and the silent normativity of modern institutional language.

4.1 The porous boundary in actual inquiry and decision

In abstract discussion, it is tempting to think of inquiry as a two step process. First, we discover the facts by value free methods. Second, we deliberate about what to do in light of those facts. In real research and policy work, the process is far more intertwined. Long before data are collected, value judgements shape the very structure of inquiry.

In science, choices must be made about which phenomena are worth investigating, which questions are urgent, which variables to measure, and which outcomes count as significant. Those choices are guided by judgements about importance, risk, justice, and human flourishing. They are not dictated by nature in a neutral way. Philosophers of science have shown in detail how background values guide the selection of problems, the specification of hypotheses, and the adoption of standards of evidence, especially in contexts where error has morally asymmetrical costs (Anderson, 2004; Douglas, 2009).

The same is true in public policy and law. When a government evaluates a health intervention, it does not only ask whether a treatment reduces a particular biomarker. It must decide what counts as a benefit, how to weigh side effects, how to balance the interests of different groups, and which time horizon to take as relevant. When courts interpret standards like reasonableness or proportionality, they cannot avoid judgements about which interests deserve more weight and what forms of risk are socially acceptable (Dworkin, 1986; Habermas, 1996). These are not simply factual issues. They presuppose a view of what is good for human beings and of how burdens and benefits should be distributed.

Even at the level of apparently technical choices, such as setting significance thresholds in statistics or loss functions in machine learning, normative considerations infiltrate the design. The choice between minimising false positives or false negatives is not only a question of mathematical convenience. In medical diagnosis, criminal justice, or credit scoring, the relative weight of these errors reflects judgements about whose interests matter more and what sorts of injustice are more grievous (Douglas, 2009; Jobin, Ienca, and Vayena, 2019).

Defenders of the fact value dichotomy sometimes concede that values shape the context of discovery and the context of application, but maintain that there remains a core context of justification that is value free. Once the questions are set and the methods chosen, they argue, the assessment of evidence and the derivation of conclusions can proceed without further normative input.

However, as Putnam and others have argued, even this more modest claim is difficult to sustain (Putnam, 2002; Anderson, 2004). Which models are judged sufficiently simple, which analogies are treated as salient, which sources are counted as credible, and which pieces of evidence are considered defeaters are all influenced by background value judgements. The distinction between signal and noise, or between an outlier and a meaningful anomaly, is not

determined by data alone. It reflects assumptions about what matters and what risks should be accepted.

The conclusion is not that anything goes, or that facts are mere projections of value. Rather, it is that factual practices are structured by normative considerations from the outset. The aspiration to maintain a purely factual zone, insulated from value, does not describe actual inquiry. It describes an idealisation that, when taken as a literal picture, obscures how knowledge is actually produced and used.

4.2 Thick concepts and hybrid vocabulary

A second line of pressure against strict fact value separation comes from the analysis of thick concepts. Bernard Williams and others have drawn attention to terms in ordinary and institutional language that both describe and evaluate at the same time, such as cruel, courageous, just, corrupt, exploitative, or degrading (Williams, 1985; Putnam, 2002). When we call an action cruel, we are not first reporting a neutral pattern of behaviour and then adding a separate value judgement. The description and the evaluation are fused. To understand such a term is, in part, to grasp its evaluative point.

Modern moral and legal discourse relies heavily on thick concepts. Legal systems speak of due process, discrimination, degrading treatment, and good faith. Professional codes speak of negligence, integrity, respect, and abuse. International human rights instruments prohibit cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment, language that has both descriptive and evaluative force (UN, 1948; Waldron, 2012). In debates about technology and artificial intelligence, terms such as manipulation, surveillance, empowerment, and exclusion play a similar role (Jobin, Ienca, and Vayena, 2019; UNESCO, 2021).

If pure logic insists on a sharp fact value division, it faces a dilemma. Either it must attempt to reconstruct thick concepts as combinations of thin factual descriptions plus independent value attitudes, or it must treat them as non cognitive expressions of approval and disapproval. Neither option is satisfactory.

The reconstructive option tends to strip thick concepts of their depth. For example, one might attempt to define cruelty purely in terms of the infliction of severe suffering without justification. Yet what counts as severe, as unjustified, and as a fitting response is itself shaped by evaluative understandings. To analyse corruption solely as violation of legal norms or deviation from explicit rules misses the sense in which corruption involves betrayal of rightful expectations and misuse of entrusted power. The evaluative content is not an external addition. It is constitutive of what these words mean in the practices that give them life (Williams, 1985; MacIntyre, 1988).

The non cognitive option, associated with certain forms of emotivism and expressivism, treats thick concepts as elaborated ways of expressing attitudes. On this view, to call a regime corrupt or a practice degrading does not state a fact about the world but expresses a stance toward it. While contemporary expressivists have developed sophisticated accounts of how such attitudes can be embedded in normative practices, the approach sits uncomfortably with the way thick concepts are used in law and policy. Accusations of corruption, exploitation, or injustice are not generally presented as mere expressions of feeling. They are advanced as claims that can

be argued for, supported by evidence, and contested as mistaken (MacIntyre, 1988; Putnam, 2002).

Thick concepts thus expose a domain where the fact value distinction breaks down at the level of language itself. Our conceptual equipment is shot through with terms whose descriptive and evaluative aspects cannot be neatly separated without distortion. This does not prove that all facts are value laden, but it undermines the notion that the most important categories in law, ethics, and policy admit of a clean division into neutral cores and detachable value elements.

4.3 The silent normativity of institutional language

A third indication that normativity is submerged rather than absent comes from the official language of modern institutions. Declarations of human rights, constitutional preambles, medical ethics codes, and global governance reports repeatedly employ terms such as dignity, equality, integrity, autonomy, and freedom. These are not introduced as mere slogans. They are treated as foundational ideas that orient and constrain the design of legal and policy frameworks (Dworkin, 1986; Waldron, 2012; Nussbaum, 2006).

From within a naturalistic, pure logic framework, there are two primary strategies for handling such language. One is deflationary: interpret terms like dignity and equality as convenient names for clusters of interests, capabilities, or contractually agreed protections. On this view, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights describes a historically contingent, but pragmatically useful, arrangement of norms that supports international cooperation and basic security (Rawls, 1999; Nussbaum, 2006). The other strategy is genealogical: explain dignitarian language as a residue of religious and metaphysical traditions that once gave it thicker content. In a secular context, the terms survive by inertia, even if their original justifications are no longer accepted (Habermas, 2008; Taylor, 2007).

Both strategies have some explanatory power, but they sit uneasily with the way dignitarian language actually functions. When legal instruments declare that all human beings possess inherent dignity and equal worth, they do not present this as a provisional compromise or as a merely historical fact. They assert it as a truth that claims allegiance and that is not supposed to be renegotiated when circumstances change. When medical ethics insists that patients must never be treated merely as means, it articulates a constraint that is intended to hold even when violating it would produce more aggregate benefit (Kant, 1996; Beauchamp and Childress, 2019).

Moreover, institutional actors often rely on the strong sense of such terms to criticise existing laws and policies. Appeals to dignity and basic equality have been central to struggles against slavery, apartheid, and systematic discrimination. In these contexts, dignity is not a summary of existing conventions. It is a standard by which conventions are judged and sometimes condemned (Waldron, 2012; Nussbaum, 2006). To explain this role entirely in naturalistic or genealogical terms risks trivialising the moral force the language carries in practice.

The resulting tension can be felt in the dissonance between institutional rhetoric and lived experience. When individuals are told that they enjoy inalienable dignity, yet encounter systems that treat them as data points, as disposable labour, or as security risks, they sense not just instrumental failure but a breach of something deeper. That breach is not captured by

descriptive categories alone. It is registered in Qualia of humiliation, exclusion, and moral injury, and it calls forth judgements couched in thick, evaluative terms.

From the standpoint of pure logic, such experiences and judgements can be acknowledged as sociological facts about how people respond to institutions. They can be measured, modelled, and perhaps managed. What is harder, given the constraints of scientism, hard evidentialism, and strict fact value separation, is to treat them as bearing on the truth about what human beings are and what they are for.

Taken together, these three lines of analysis suggest that normativity is not an optional supplement that could be added to an otherwise value free picture of factual inquiry and institutional life. Norms structure what questions are asked, what categories are used, and what counts as success. They are embedded in the very language through which institutions articulate their mission and justify their actions. The attempt to maintain a strict fact value separation as the backbone of an architecture of truth governance is therefore unstable.

For the purposes of this article, this instability is not taken as a reason to abandon rational standards or to collapse into relativism. It is taken as a sign that any realistic and honest architecture of truth governance must include an account of the source and authority of the norms that factual practices presuppose. If our language about cruelty, corruption, dignity, and equality is more than expressive noise, then there must be some order of reality to which it answerably refers. The next section argues that attempts to locate this order within a purely naturalistic horizon, while preserving the unconditional tone of human dignity and telos, fail on their own terms. That failure, in turn, opens the way for reintroducing Sabda as the authoritative source of norm and telos in a way that does not negate logic, but rather allows it to operate with full awareness of its dependence.

5. Dignity, telos, and the necessity of Sabda

The language of human dignity and purpose has become central in contemporary law, ethics, and policy. International human rights instruments describe dignity as inherent and inalienable. National constitutions and medical codes appeal to dignity to mark limits that must not be crossed, even in pursuit of desirable goals (UN, 1948; Beauchamp and Childress, 2019). Moral and political philosophers increasingly treat dignity and capabilities as the foundation of just institutions (Kant, 1996; Nussbaum, 2006; Waldron, 2012). At the same time, the ideology of pure logic seeks to understand these notions within a naturalistic horizon that recognises only empirical facts, rational agreements, and emergent social practices.

This section argues that there is a structural tension between the way contemporary institutions use dignitarian and teleological language and the resources available within pure logic to justify that language. When dignity and telos are treated as products of capacities, evolutionary histories, or rational contracts, their unconditional tone is difficult to sustain. The minimal human dignity axioms that law and ethics presuppose point instead toward a source of norm and telos that stands above natural processes and human agreements. Sabda, understood as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, names this source.

5.1 Minimal human dignity axioms

To clarify what is at stake, it is useful to articulate a small set of minimal human dignity axioms that are already implicit in many legal and ethical frameworks. These axioms do not attempt to resolve all debates about moral theory. They capture the core commitments expressed in human rights language and in widely endorsed professional norms.

A first axiom is inherent worth. Each human being is taken to possess a worth that is not exhausted by usefulness, productivity, or social status. This worth is not a function of market value, talent, or contribution. It is not something that can be gained, traded, or lost in proportion to performance. Documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights explicitly affirm that dignity is possessed by all human beings simply as human beings (UN, 1948; Waldron, 2012).

A second axiom is inviolability. There are forms of treatment that are regarded as wrong in themselves, not merely undesirable in most circumstances. Torture, degrading humiliation, and the reduction of persons to mere tools are treated as categorically prohibited, not as options to be weighed against potential benefits. Kant's insistence that persons must never be treated merely as means, but always also as ends in themselves, is one influential articulation of this axiom (Kant, 1996). Modern medical and research ethics codes build on this by prohibiting practices that treat persons as disposable resources for scientific or social gains (Beauchamp and Childress, 2019).

A third axiom is basic equality. In some fundamental sense, the moral claims of each person have equal standing. This does not mean that every preference has equal weight, but that no one may be treated as if their suffering counts for nothing. The language of equal concern and respect in political philosophy and of equal basic rights in law expresses this axiom (Dworkin, 1986; Rawls, 1999).

A fourth axiom concerns telos. Human life is assumed to be ordered toward goods that are more than private attractions. Truth, justice, fidelity, and care are treated as goods that make claims on us, not simply as options among many. To describe someone as corrupted, degraded, or dehumanised is to imply that there are ways of living that are unfitting for beings of a certain kind. Capabilities approaches in political philosophy, for example, interpret human flourishing in terms of opportunities to realise functionings that are taken to be worthy of choice and central to a life with human dignity (Nussbaum, 2006).

These axioms are not marginal. They structure debates about bioethics, criminal justice, social policy, and international law. The question is whether an architecture of pure logic, committed to scientism, hard evidentialism, strict fact value separation, and naturalistic accounts of normativity, can give them a foundation that matches the strength of the claims that institutions actually make.

5.2 Naturalistic accounts of dignity and telos

Within a naturalistic horizon, several strategies have been developed to make sense of dignity and telos while avoiding appeals to any higher order norm. Each preserves important insights, but each faces difficulties when tasked with sustaining the minimal axioms just described.

One strategy grounds dignity in capacities, such as rationality, self consciousness, or autonomy. On this view, to say that humans have dignity is to say that they are the kind of beings who can set ends for themselves, reflect on their choices, and participate in mutual recognition (Kant, 1996; Korsgaard, 1996). The special status of human beings is thus rooted in features that distinguish them from other animals.

This approach captures the intuition that rational and reflective capacities matter. Yet it struggles at the margins. Infants, those with severe cognitive impairments, and persons in advanced dementia may lack the capacities that are said to ground dignity. If dignity depends on actual possession of such capacities, then the claim of the most vulnerable appears weaker just where many moral and legal frameworks insist that protection is strongest. Attempts to respond by appealing to potential capacities, species membership, or typical capacities introduce elements that are difficult to describe without invoking a thicker account of what humans are for (Nussbaum, 2006; Waldron, 2012).

A second strategy treats dignity as an evolved social construct. Norms against cruelty and degradation are explained as adaptive responses that increased cooperation, trust, and long term group survival. The language of dignity and rights is then interpreted as a cultural crystallisation of successful coordination strategies. To call someone a bearer of dignity, on this view, is to express commitment to norms that have proven beneficial under certain conditions (Kitcher, 1993; Sterelny, 2012).

This story can illuminate how certain practices emerge and persist. It can explain why many societies converge on restraints against extreme violence. Yet it does not readily justify the unconditional tone of modern dignitarian language. If the authority of dignity norms rests entirely on their contribution to group stability or fitness, then, in principle, they can be reconsidered when conditions change. In situations where violating dignity norms could significantly improve survival prospects, nothing in the evolutionary story itself forbids such violations. The idea of inviolability becomes at best a strong, but always revisable, convention.

A third strategy locates telos and dignity in rational agreement. Contractarian and deliberative accounts hold that what counts as a basic right, a fair distribution, or a legitimate constraint on power depends on what free and equal agents could or would agree to under appropriate conditions. Human beings have dignity because they must be treated as potential participants in such a rational contract. Telos is defined by the principles that would be endorsed under fair procedures or behind veils of ignorance (Rawls, 1999; Habermas, 1996).

This framework captures central features of modern moral consciousness. It highlights the importance of mutual justification and public reasons. Yet it, too, faces pressure from the axioms it seeks to ground. If the content of dignity and telos is entirely determined by what agents would agree to under specified conditions, then disagreement about those conditions can lead to radically different accounts of what dignity requires. Moreover, if a rationally acceptable agreement endorsed practices that many would consider degrading or unjust, there is no independent standard within the theory to say that the agreement is wrong. Dissenters who refuse to accept such outcomes on the ground that they violate a deeper norm about what humans are become difficult to locate within the architecture (Dworkin, 1986; Waldron, 2012).

In each case, naturalistic strategies can explain something important about our moral practices. Capacity based accounts highlight crucial features of personhood. Evolutionary stories illuminate how cooperation and restraint can emerge. Contractarian approaches articulate

ideals of fairness and reciprocity. The problem is not that they are entirely mistaken. It is that, taken alone, they do not secure the unconditional dimension of dignity and telos that modern institutions continue to presuppose.

If dignity is always pegged to capacities, some lives are, in principle, less inviolable than others. If dignity is a successful social construct, then its authority is hostage to future calculations of utility. If dignity and telos are products of contract, they have no stronger standing than the procedures and assumptions that generated them. In each case, the minimal axioms that law and ethics endorse are quietly weakened.

5.3 Sabda as the authoritative source of norm and telos

The difficulty is not merely theoretical. It surfaces whenever individuals and communities invoke dignity and telos to criticise laws and practices that are formally rational and empirically efficient, yet experienced as dehumanising. Victims of torture, structural racism, or exploitative labour relations do not simply say that existing arrangements are suboptimal. They say that something has been done to them that is incompatible with what they are, that they have been treated in ways that no one should ever be treated. Their protest presupposes more than a local convention or a contingent contract. It presupposes that there is a truth about what human beings are and are for that stands in judgement over institutions.

From within the constraints of pure logic, this protest can be described and perhaps sympathised with. It can be modelled as a psychological reaction or as a social movement. What is harder is to affirm that the protest is in contact with a real moral order that is not simply the projection of preference or history. To do that would require acknowledging a source of norm and telos that is not reducible to empirical facts or rational agreements.

Sabda, understood here as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, names such a source. To invoke Sabda is to affirm that human beings are not accidental bearers of moral worth, but addressed creatures whose dignity is conferred by a reality that precedes and surpasses them. It is to say that there are ways of treating persons that are intrinsically unfitting, not because of their empirical consequences, but because they contradict the meaning of what persons are in light of this address.

In relation to dignity, Sabda grounds the claim that each human being has inherent worth that is equal in its basic form and cannot be lost. This worth does not depend on capacities that may be diminished, on contributions that may be withheld, or on membership in a particular political order. It is a function of being called and recognised by the source of norm and telos. In theological traditions, this is often expressed in language of creation, image bearing, or divine vocation. In the present argument, the emphasis is on the structural role of such a claim, rather than on its specific doctrinal formulations.

In relation to telos, Sabda grounds the conviction that human life is ordered toward goods that are not invented by individuals or collectives. To speak of a calling to truth, justice, and fidelity is to affirm that these goods are fitting for beings of our kind, not merely chosen by them. It is to say that certain patterns of life, however satisfying they may feel, are corrupt or dehumanising because they deviate from the norm inscribed in created reality. Without some such account of telos, talk of corruption, betrayal, and dehumanisation risks collapsing into expressions of frustration with failed projects rather than into judgements about unfitting lives.

From the standpoint of pure logic, Sabda may appear as a reintroduction of problematic metaphysics or sectarian authority. The argument developed in this article points in the opposite direction. Pure logic, when taken as a sovereign architecture, already presupposes norms and axioms that it cannot generate from within its own naturalistic commitments. It relies on basic trusts about intelligibility and truth, and on strong claims about dignity and inviolability, that point beyond its official boundaries. Sabda is not an optional ornament added from the outside. It is a name for the order of reality that must exist if the norms of rational practice and the axioms of dignity are to be more than local habits.

To say that Sabda is necessary is not to say that its content is transparent or uncontroversial. Interpretations of Sabda are mediated by traditions, texts, and communities, and they are subject to misreading and abuse. Precisely here, logic, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment become indispensable. Logic tests claims about Sabda for coherence and consistency. Qualia records the lived experience that follows from different interpretations. Mistika attends to the intentions and spiritual orientations of those who claim to speak in the name of Sabda. Akhlak evaluates the character of interpreters. Intention-Trace Alignment audits the long term moral traces left by institutions that invoke Sabda.

In the architecture proposed later in this article, Sabda retains its primacy as the authoritative source of norm and telos, while logic and the other domains are given real, not merely decorative, roles in the discernment of truth. The failure of pure logic to ground dignity and telos without contradiction thus becomes a door into a more complex and honest account of truth governance. Sabda is not brought in to silence questions, but to make sense of why those questions, especially about human worth and purpose, are as urgent as they are.

The next section develops this positive proposal by presenting The Cohesive Tetrad as an architecture in which Sabda, logic, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment are woven into a coherent order. In that architecture, logic is neither demonised nor deified. It is returned to its proper place as a powerful but derivative instrument in the service of a truth whose ultimate origin lies in Sabda.

6. The Cohesive Tetrad as an alternative architecture of truth governance

If the argument so far is sound, pure logic can no longer be treated as a sovereign architecture of truth governance. It remains valuable as a family of techniques, disciplines, and intellectual habits, but it cannot secure its own basic norms, it cannot sustain a strict fact value distinction in practice, and it cannot adequately ground strong claims about human dignity and telos. This section presents The Cohesive Tetrad as an alternative architecture that explicitly recognises the primacy of Sabda and, at the same time, assigns proper and accountable roles to logic, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment.

The aim is not to replace one ideology with another, but to articulate a framework that is clear enough to be tested by demanding standards of rationality. The Cohesive Tetrad begins from the conviction that domains of truth which have been artificially separated or hidden under neutral language must be named, ordered, and related within a coherent structure.

6.1 Naming and locating the domains

The Cohesive Tetrad starts by naming explicitly the domains that have been latent in the preceding analysis.

Sabda is Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos. Sabda marks the claim that there is a source of norm and purpose that is not created by human will, whether individual or collective. Theological traditions describe Sabda in the language of revelation, command, or normative utterance. In the present framework, the emphasis falls on the structure: norm and telos arrive as address, not as products of evolutionary accident, social contract, or majority preference.

Logic is the domain of inference, argument structure, and tests of coherence. Here belong theories of justification, probability, and causal reasoning. Logic connects premises to conclusions, tests consistency, and manages the relation between evidence and belief (BonJour, 1985; Conee and Feldman, 2004). In the architecture proposed here, logic is no longer treated as the source of ultimate normativity. It functions as a disciplined instrument of clarification and critique.

Qualia designates how institutional realities are experienced from the inside: whether law is felt as recognition or erasure, whether policy generates safety or threat, whether technology communicates respect or objectification. Work on epistemic injustice and lived experience shows that this dimension is not mere subjective noise, but a mode in which the world is disclosed to moral subjects (Fricker, 2007; Medina, 2013). Qualia records the concrete impact of truth governance on human lives.

Mistika is Mistika, the intentional-spiritual dimension of journeying toward direct encounter with the transcendent. Mistika concerns the deepest orientation of the epistemic will: whether knowledge is sought for truth or prestige, whether power is exercised to serve or to dominate. In the language of virtue epistemology, Mistika is closely related to the love of truth and to the disposition to place oneself under reality rather than to bend reality to one's desires (Zagzebski, 1996; Baehr, 2011).

Akhlak refers to the relatively stable configuration of moral dispositions in individuals and communities: honesty, intellectual humility, carefulness, courage, and related traits. Scholarship on intellectual virtues argues that such traits are not external moral decorations added to an otherwise self sufficient rationality, but internal conditions for genuine truth seeking rather than mere argument play (Zagzebski, 1996; Roberts and Wood, 2007). Akhlak shapes how Sabda is read, how logic is used, and how seriously Qualia and Mistika are taken.

Intention-Trace Alignment is the degree of alignment between epistemic intention and epistemic moral trace, that is, between publicly avowed epistemic aims and the long term moral evidence left by institutional practice. Research on epistemic injustice, trust in science, and the social role of expertise underlines the need to audit not only declared aims, but also patterned harms and exclusions in the distribution of epistemic benefits and burdens (Fricker, 2007; Medina, 2013; Douglas, 2009).

Naming these six domains does not conjure new entities into existence. It simply acknowledges more candidly dimensions that already operate within science, law, and technology, but that

are often hidden behind neutral vocabulary or reduced to a single dominant domain, typically logic.

6.2 Vertical and horizontal ordering

Architecture is not only a list of components. It concerns how those components are ordered vertically and horizontally. The decisive difference between The Cohesive Tetrad and the ideology of pure logic lies in this ordering.

Vertically, Sabda occupies the apex as the source of norm and telos. The claim that humans possess dignity that cannot be negotiated away and that certain forms of treatment are intrinsically wrong is understood as a response to Sabda, not as a product of evolution, contract, or consensus alone (Kant, 1996; Waldron, 2012; Nussbaum, 2006). This placement does not eliminate the need for interpretation and critical testing, but it affirms that there is a normative source that does not originate in rational procedures.

Logic sits on the next tier as an organ of clarification and critique. Logic assesses the coherence of claims about Sabda, tests arguments about dignity and telos, and examines empirical claims about the world. In this architecture, logic is no longer saddled with the impossible task of creating the very norms it needs in order to operate. The regress, circularity, and stipulation pressures described earlier no longer function as threats to rationality, because the basic norms are received rather than generated from within the system (BonJour, 1985; Klein, 1998). Logic is tasked with guarding against inconsistency and manipulation in human responses to Sabda, not with validating its own existence.

Qualia and Mistika form an intermediate layer that links structural commitments to inner life and experience. Qualia registers whether an architecture of truth governance produces a sense of safety, justice, and respect, or humiliation and invisibility, in line with insights from work on epistemic injustice and moral injury (Fricker, 2007; Medina, 2013). Mistika evaluates whether epistemic intention is genuinely oriented toward truth and justice, or silently captured by other motives.

Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment occupy a long range evaluative layer. Akhlak scrutinises the character of agents and communities operating under the architecture. Intention-Trace Alignment compares declared epistemic intentions with the actual moral trace of policies, technologies, and judgments over time (Zagzebski, 1996; Roberts and Wood, 2007; Douglas, 2009). Together, they prevent the architecture from being judged solely on procedural elegance, without regard for its enduring human consequences.

Horizontally, each domain has a corrective role with respect to the others when they go astray. Sabda, as a category, does not function as a licence for any claim of authority to escape scrutiny by logic, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment. Claims that invoke Sabda but produce a persistent trace of humiliation and systematic disregard for minimal human dignity axioms are prima facie suspect as misinterpretations or instrumentalisation of Sabda (Waldron, 2012; Nussbaum, 2006). Likewise, logic that refuses to attend to Qualia and Mistika is liable to harden into a cold legalism or technocracy. Qualia that rejects logical scrutiny risks sentimentalism. Mistika that is not audited by Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment can degenerate into a search for spiritual comfort that ignores injustice.

The Cohesive Tetrad therefore avoids two familiar distortions: monism, where one domain (typically logic) claims full sovereignty, and fragmentation, where domains of truth operate in isolation without structured tension and mutual correction. The architecture acknowledges tension as a healthy feature of truth governance rather than as a defect.

6.3 Answering the structural failures of pure logic

Within this framework, it is possible to revisit the three structural failures of pure logic: the problem of self grounding, the breakdown of fact value separation, and the failure to ground dignity and telos.

First, self grounding. In The Cohesive Tetrad, the basic norms of rational practice, such as intellectual honesty, openness to correction, and orientation to truth, are understood as responses to Sabda rather than as products of the very procedures they enable. This is consistent with the thought, articulated by several twentieth century thinkers, that rational practice rests on forms of trust that are not themselves the outcome of ordinary argument, but conditions for argument to make sense (Wittgenstein, 1969; Polanyi, 1958; Zagzebski, 2012). By acknowledging Sabda as the normative source, the architecture terminates the regress of justification at a point that is not arbitrary, but structurally appropriate: outside the inferential system, in the order that grounds and addresses that system.

Logic is no longer required to prove the norms that allow it to function. Its task is to ensure that human interpretations of Sabda and empirical claims about the world are internally coherent and responsive to evidence (Haack, 2003; Douglas, 2009). In this sense, logic is not diminished but freed from a role it cannot fulfil.

Second, fact and value. The Cohesive Tetrad does not attempt to restore a strict fact value dichotomy. Instead, it interprets facts as elements of a created and normatively charged order. Analyses by Putnam, Anderson, and Douglas of the role of values in science show that value judgements shape problem choice, concept formation, and standards of evidence (Putnam, 2002; Anderson, 2004; Douglas, 2009). In the proposed architecture, such presence of value is not treated as a contamination, but as something that must be acknowledged, structured, and held accountable.

Qualia and Mistika are given formal roles in registering how values penetrate experience and intention. Logic helps clarify the relations among these dimensions, rather than trying to separate them artificially. Sabda supplies the horizon in which reality is more than a collection of neutral facts, but a meaningful and purposive order. The integration of fact and value thus occurs within an explicit structure rather than by unacknowledged smuggling.

Third, dignity and telos. The earlier analysis of capacity based, evolutionary, and contractarian accounts showed that, within a purely naturalistic horizon, it is difficult to preserve the strong content of claims about inherent and inalienable dignity and inviolable constraints (Kant, 1996; Rawls, 1999; Nussbaum, 2006; Waldron, 2012). The Cohesive Tetrad recovers the force of these claims by presenting them as consequences of Sabda: human beings are understood as called and recognised by the highest normative source. Minimal human dignity axioms are treated as explicit articulations of that call.

Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment become tools for auditing the extent to which legal systems, policies, and technologies genuinely honour that dignity. When there is a gap between avowed intention and moral trace, the gap is no longer interpreted merely as technical inefficiency, but as an architectural disturbance in the relation to Sabda and to the telos it sets (Fricker, 2007; Medina, 2013; UNESCO, 2021).

In all this, the status of logic is not lowered but reconfigured. Logic remains indispensable for:

- testing the consistency of interpretations of Sabda,
- elaborating the practical implications of dignity axioms,
- evaluating empirical claims about institutional effects, and
- connecting data to norms in ways that can be defended in public forums.

What changes is that logic no longer plays the double role of both creature and creator of norm. It operates as a disciplined organ within an architecture that acknowledges a normative source beyond itself.

6.4 Trajectories for law and artificial intelligence

The argument so far has been developed at a philosophical and conceptual level. An architecture of truth governance, however, is only worth serious attention if it can make a difference in concrete institutional fields. The Cohesive Tetrad has begun to be tested in two arenas that are especially sensitive to claims of rationality and dignity: law and artificial intelligence.

In law, recent work has highlighted the persistent interplay between the language of rights, dignity, and procedural justice, and underlying questions about the source of normative authority and the limits of purely procedural legitimacy (Habermas, 1996; Dworkin, 1986; Waldron, 2012). The Cohesive Tetrad can be used to:

- reread the role of Sabda in both explicitly religious and secularised legal traditions,
- map how legal logic operates in relation to the Qualia of affected parties,
- evaluate the Mistika and Akhlak of legal actors, and
- audit Intention-Trace Alignment of courts and agencies with respect to the dignity axioms they claim to uphold.

In the field of artificial intelligence, global reports on AI ethics acknowledge the importance of principles such as fairness, accountability, transparency, and respect for human dignity, but they often struggle to give deep accounts of why human beings must be treated in particular ways beyond risk management and public trust (Jobin, Ienca, and Vayena, 2019; OECD, 2019; UNESCO, 2021). The Cohesive Tetrad provides a framework for:

- interpreting these principles as partial expressions of Sabda's call to dignity and telos,
- placing algorithmic logic under the twin oversight of Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment, and
- integrating Qualia of users and Mistika of designers into governance analysis, not as noise, but as epistemically relevant data.

The detailed development of these applications belongs to separate studies. For present purposes, it is sufficient to note that The Cohesive Tetrad is not merely an abstract schema. It already functions as a lens and a design tool in fields where the limitations of pure logic are becoming increasingly apparent. In doing so, it resists a false choice between surrendering entirely to the ideology of pure logic, which cannot justify its own norms, and reverting to forms of authoritarian appeal to revelation that refuse logical and moral audit.

The next and final section draws together the threads of the argument, summarising how the critique of pure logic and the proposal of The Cohesive Tetrad hang together, and indicating how this architectural shift might reshape debates about truth governance in law, technology, and public reason.

7. Conclusion

This article began from a tension that is deeply embedded in contemporary institutions. On the one hand, scientific, legal, and technological actors describe themselves as governed by evidence, neutrality, and procedural rationality. On the other hand, those same actors rely on a vocabulary of human dignity, basic rights, inviolable constraints, and non negotiable goods. The first vocabulary suggests that pure logic can rule alone. The second presupposes a source of norm and telos that cannot be generated by logic operating within a purely naturalistic horizon.

The first task was to reconstruct pure logic, not as a straw figure, but as a serious architecture of truth governance. Drawing on the genealogy from positivism to contemporary scientism, and on debates in epistemology and philosophy of science, I identified four structural theses that together define the ideology of pure logic: scientism, hard evidentialism, strict fact value separation, and naturalistic accounts of telos and dignity (Comte, 1974; Ayer, 1936; Haack, 2003; Putnam, 2002; Rea, 2018). In its strongest form, this configuration promises an image of rational authority that is emancipated from revelation and tradition, and that can regulate public life in plural societies without appeal to comprehensive doctrines.

The second task was to show that this architecture cannot bear the weight that it implicitly claims. Three structural failures emerged. First, pure logic cannot ground the basic norms of rational practice without falling into regress, circularity, or stipulation. The obligation to seek truth, to avoid deception, and to submit to evidence is presupposed by any serious attempt at justification. It cannot be derived from the very procedures it makes possible (BonJour, 1985; Klein, 1998; Zagzebski, 1996). Second, the strict fact value distinction dissolves in actual practices of inquiry and decision. From problem selection to standards of evidence, value judgements shape the production and interpretation of facts, and thick concepts such as cruelty, corruption, and degrading treatment fuse description with evaluation in ways that resist clean separation (Williams, 1985; Anderson, 2004; Douglas, 2009; Putnam, 2002). Third, naturalistic accounts of dignity and telos fail to sustain the minimal axioms that contemporary law and ethics presuppose. Capacity based, evolutionary, and contractarian strategies each capture important insights, but none secures the unconditional character of inherent worth, inviolability, and basic equality that human rights language continues to assert (Kant, 1996; Rawls, 1999; Nussbaum, 2006; Waldron, 2012).

These failures do not imply that logic is an enemy of truth. They show that logic, taken as a sovereign architecture, is being asked to do work it cannot perform without borrowing from

sources it officially disowns. The basic trusts that sustain rational practice, and the strong claims about human dignity that institutions invoke, point beyond themselves to an order of reality in which truth, worth, and purpose are not accidental or merely constructed. The name Sabda, understood as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, was introduced as a way of marking that order.

On this basis, the article proposed The Cohesive Tetrad as an alternative architecture of truth governance. Rather than treating logic as the origin of normativity, this architecture places Sabda at the top of a vertical order and then arranges logic, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment in roles that are distinct yet interdependent. Logic retains its critical and clarifying authority. It tests claims about Sabda for coherence, examines empirical assertions about the world, and connects evidence to policy in ways that can be scrutinised (Haack, 2003; Douglas, 2009). Qualia gives voice to the lived experience of persons and communities under particular regimes of truth, including experiences of epistemic injustice and moral injury (Fricker, 2007; Medina, 2013). Mistika, the intentional spiritual dimension of journeying toward direct encounter with the transcendent, concerns the depth and direction of epistemic intention. Akhlak reflects the role of intellectual virtues in sustaining honest inquiry, and Intention-Trace Alignment measures the degree to which declared epistemic intentions match the long term moral traces of institutional practice (Zagzebski, 1996; Roberts and Wood, 2007).

The theoretical contribution of the article can be summarised in three movements. First, it reframes the classic conflict between reason and revelation as a question of architectural design. The issue is not whether logic is valuable, but whether it can credibly claim sovereignty over norm and telos. Second, it articulates a structural critique of pure logic that is internal to its own concerns. The argument relies on regress problems in justification, on detailed work in philosophy of science about the entanglement of fact and value, and on dignitarian and capabilities approaches in law and ethics, rather than on appeals that would be invisible from within those fields (Putnam, 2002; Anderson, 2004; Douglas, 2009; Nussbaum, 2006; Waldron, 2012). Third, it introduces The Cohesive Tetrad as a positive candidate architecture in which Sabda and logic are not rivals but partners, each with defined roles and limits.

This is not the end of the argument but its beginning. Several trajectories for further work suggest themselves. One concerns the development of more precise formulations of minimal human dignity axioms and their relationship to diverse religious and philosophical traditions that claim to mediate Sabda. Another concerns the elaboration of Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment into operational tools for auditing institutions in science, law, and technology. A third concerns the detailed application of The Cohesive Tetrad to domains such as artificial intelligence, where the language of neutrality, fairness, and respect for human dignity is already under strain (Jobin, Ienca, and Vayena, 2019; OECD, 2019; UNESCO, 2021).

If the analysis offered here is broadly correct, contemporary societies face a choice that cannot be postponed indefinitely. They may continue to speak as if pure logic is sufficient, while silently relying on moral and dignitarian claims that it cannot justify. The gap between official metaphysics and actual practice will then widen, risking cynicism about both science and law. Alternatively, they may acknowledge that logic is not the source of its own authority, that the norms governing serious inquiry and the axioms of human dignity require a deeper ground. The Cohesive Tetrad is offered as one attempt to think through what such an architecture of truth governance might look like: an architecture in which Sabda supplies norm and telos, logic serves as a disciplined language of critique and clarification, Qualia and Mistika keep

institutions attentive to lived reality and intention, Akhlak forms the character of knowers, and Intention-Trace Alignment ensures that the moral cost of knowing is never pushed out of view.

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Sabda, Human Dignity, and Telos: Reframing Moral Foundations Beyond Pure Logic

Abstract

Contemporary debates in law, bioethics, public policy, and artificial intelligence rely heavily on the language of human dignity and human telos to condemn torture, degrading treatment, systemic humiliation, and the instrumental use of persons, yet the dominant foundations mobilised to justify these claims remain largely naturalistic and procedural, grounding normativity in human capacities, evolutionary histories, or contractarian constructions under the assumed sovereignty of pure logic. This article argues that this constellation is structurally unstable. First, it reconstructs capacity based, evolutionary, and contractarian accounts in their strongest forms and subjects them to a set of minimal human dignity axioms in hard cases such as infants, persons with severe cognitive impairments, economically burdensome dependents, structurally silenced populations, and future generations, showing that these frameworks either dilute the content of dignity or covertly import thicker premises they cannot generate from within their own architectures. Second, it develops a transcendental diagnosis by arguing that strong dignity discourse implicitly presupposes a vertically anchored, norm giving, and telos disclosing source that precedes capacities, evolution, and contracts, which the article names as Sabda, understood as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, and embeds within The Cohesive Tetrad, an epistemic ethical architecture that integrates Sabda with Logic, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment. Third, it advances a metalogical critique of pure logic, showing that logic cannot ground its own axioms, cannot generate the epistemic "ought" that makes validity binding, and is blind to telos and content, so that even the authority of logic ultimately depends on a horizon of norm and purpose better captured by Sabda. Taken together, these moves support the central claim that if we take our strongest uses of dignity and telos seriously, moral foundations must be reframed beyond pure logic by acknowledging the epistemic priority of Sabda and integrating it into a disciplined architecture of truth governance for law, public policy, and artificial intelligence.

Keywords: *telos; Sabda; pure logic; truth governance; naturalism; contractarianism; The Cohesive Tetrad; artificial intelligence; public reason.*

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1. Introduction

It is difficult today to write about law, bioethics, public policy, or artificial intelligence without almost immediately encountering the language of human dignity. Constitutional courts appeal to dignity when they prohibit torture and degrading treatment. International bodies invoke it when they condemn systemic humiliation, indefinite detention, and racialised violence. Designers and regulators of AI systems now speak, sometimes rather quickly, about human centric or dignity preserving technologies in guidelines and strategic documents. In all these settings, dignity is expected to do something very specific: it names a status that cannot be traded away and marks a line that even powerful institutions are not permitted to cross.

At the same time, the background picture that guides much contemporary theory is remarkably modest. Moral and legal claims are expected to be grounded within a naturalistic and procedural frame. In practice, this usually means three things. First, we look for foundations in human capacities such as rational agency, autonomy, or a list of central capabilities (Kant, 1996 [1785]; Nussbaum, 2011). Second, we tell evolutionary stories about how certain norms and practices emerged because they stabilised cooperation and improved group fitness (Darwin, 1871; Ruse and Wilson, 1986). Third, we rely on contractarian and contractualist models in which free and equal persons, or their idealised representatives, choose principles under fair conditions that encode mutual justification (Rawls, 1971; Scanlon, 1998). Running quietly in the background is an even deeper confidence: that pure logic, understood as a formal enterprise that need not answer to any higher authority, can arbitrate between competing claims and keep our normative ambitions under control.

This combination of strong front stage language and modest backstage commitments creates a tension that can be felt but is rarely named. When we say that every human being has an inherent worth that does not depend on performance or social recognition, that this worth is equal across persons, and that some modes of treatment are simply ruled out even if they would benefit many others, we seem to be saying something highly demanding. When we then try to ground these claims in capacities, evolution, contracts, and pure logic, the ground begins to move under our feet. The more seriously we take our strongest uses of dignity, the less plausible it becomes that these foundations are sufficient on their own.

The intuition behind this article can be put bluntly. If we really mean what we say when we invoke human dignity and human telos in their strongest sense, then our usual foundations do not suffice. Capacity based accounts tend to exclude precisely those who most need protection, or else they quietly smuggle in a thicker view of human nature and purpose than they officially admit. Evolutionary narratives can explain why dignity norms appear and stabilise, but they cannot transform facts about adaptive success into unconditional claims about what must never be done. Contractarian constructions do a better job of expressing equality and public justification, but they ultimately presuppose, rather than generate, the judgment of who must count as a bearer of claims. Pure logic, finally, although indispensable, turns out to be unable to justify its own normative authority or to decide which ends its inferential power should serve.

The project of this article is to make that tension precise and then to turn it into a positive proposal. I begin by reconstructing three families of contemporary foundations for dignity and telos-capacity based, evolutionary, and contractarian-as charitably as possible, not as straw men. I then introduce a set of minimal human dignity axioms that capture the least we seem to be committed to when we talk about dignity in law, bioethics, and public policy. These axioms are used as stress tests in hard cases: infants and those who will never develop central

capacities, persons with severe cognitive impairment, economically burdensome dependents, structurally silenced groups, and future generations. The first result is negative but important: the three families of accounts cannot, by their own lights, satisfy these axioms without either weakening the content of dignity or borrowing from a thicker normative source that they do not acknowledge.

The argument then takes a further step. Instead of treating pure logic as a neutral and self sufficient arbiter standing above moral disagreement, I examine its self limitation. I argue that logic cannot justify its own axioms without circularity, cannot generate the basic epistemic "ought" that makes logical consequence binding rather than merely interesting, and is blind to the telos and moral quality of the contents it connects. Logic remains indispensable, but its authority is derivative. It depends on a prior horizon of norm and purpose that it does not create. This is particularly evident once we consider how logical and data driven systems, including contemporary AI, can be deployed to produce formally impeccable yet substantively unjust decisions if left without an external standard of what humans are and what they are for.

Once that horizon is brought into view, a different picture emerges. I argue that our strongest commitments about human dignity and human telos implicitly presuppose something like a Word that speaks with authority about what humans are and what they are for. I name this source Sabda, understood in a disciplined way as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, and I embed it in The Cohesive Tetrad, an epistemic ethical architecture that integrates Sabda with Logic, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment. Within this architecture, claims made in the name of Sabda are not insulated from critique; they are tested conceptually, experientially, spiritually, practically, and historically.

The wager of the article is that this move does not weaken rationality, but instead takes seriously what our dignity discourse already assumes and what pure logic cannot secure by itself.

1.1 Thesis and contribution

The demands of a level article are high. It is not enough to restate known positions or to offer a slightly improved synthesis. The work must bring something genuinely new, and must do so with methodological rigor and argumentative clarity. In that spirit, the central thesis and contributions of this article can be stated succinctly.

Central thesis.

If we take our strongest contemporary claims about human dignity and human telos at face value, including their application to the most vulnerable and the not yet born, then neither capacity based, evolutionary, nor contractarian foundations, even when backed by pure logic, can carry the full normative weight they are asked to bear. The coherence of such claims requires a vertically anchored, norm giving, and telos disclosing source that precedes human capacities, histories, and agreements. I name this source Sabda, understood as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, and I argue that Sabda must stand in epistemic priority even to pure logic, which cannot ground its own normativity.

Original contributions.

1. **A unified diagnostic of failure across three major families of foundations.**

   Rather than criticising capacity, evolutionary, and contractarian accounts separately, the article shows that they share a common structural problem when tested against minimal dignity axioms in hard cases. This yields a single, coherent diagnosis of why naturalistic and procedural foundations are weaker than their advocates often assume.

2. **A sharpened set of minimal human dignity axioms as a methodological tool.**

   The article formulates axioms for inherent worth, basic equality, non instrumentalisation, integrity across vulnerability, and accountable self correction not as a new theory of the person, but as an explicit reconstruction of what current legal, bioethical, and policy practice already presuppose when they invoke human dignity. These axioms function as a portable stress test that can be used beyond the present argument.

3. **A metalogical critique of pure logic's claim to ultimate authority.**

   The article advances a focused analysis of the limits of pure logic, showing that it cannot justify its own axioms, cannot generate the fundamental epistemic "ought" to care about truth and coherence, and cannot determine the telos or moral valence of the inferences it permits. This metalogical critique is integrated directly into the dignity debate, rather than treated as a separate technical issue.

4. **The introduction of Sabda as a structurally specified source of norm and telos.**

   Sabda is not presented as a vague religious appeal, but as the kind of Word that is logically required if our strongest dignity commitments are to be coherent: universal in address, non contingent in its judgments, orientation giving with respect to human telos, and capable of judging even stable and popular orders.

5. **The development of The Cohesive Tetrad as an architecture of truth governance.**

   By embedding Sabda in a sixfold architecture that includes Logic, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment, the article offers a concrete model of how a norm and telos giving Word can be engaged and held to account in law, public policy, and AI governance. This goes beyond the usual dichotomy between secular proceduralism and unexamined religious appeals by placing all claims, including claims about Sabda, under multi register scrutiny.

Taken together, these contributions aim not only to add one more voice to the dignity literature, but to shift the terms of debate. The core claim is that as long as we speak seriously about human dignity and human telos, we cannot avoid the question of Sabda. We can either continue to borrow silently from a Word we refuse to name, or we can bring that Sabda into the open and subject our appeals to it to disciplined scrutiny within an architecture of truth governance suited to contemporary law, public policy, and artificial intelligence.

2. Contemporary foundations of human dignity and telos

Contemporary discourse on human dignity and human telos does not arise in a conceptual vacuum. It stands on top of several powerful traditions that try to answer a basic question: why, if at all, do human beings have a special status, and what are they for. In what follows, I concentrate on three families of answers that dominate current debates in moral and legal philosophy: capacity based accounts, evolutionary narratives, and contractarian constructions. They are not the only families available, but they are sufficiently influential and structurally representative to serve as test cases for the broader naturalistic and procedural project.

Rather than treating them as easy opponents, I reconstruct each in a form that is recognisable to its strongest defenders. The point is not to score quick victories, but to see what happens when these accounts are asked to carry the full weight of contemporary dignity talk, especially in hard cases.

2.1 Capacity based accounts: dignity as grounded in what humans can do or be

Capacity based accounts begin from a simple intuition. There is something distinctive about what human beings can do or be, and this distinctiveness grounds a special status. Dignity is not a mysterious substance; it is the moral shadow of a set of capacities. Two versions are especially prominent in the literature.

2.1.1 Rational agency and autonomy

In the first, more Kantian line, dignity is tied to rational agency and autonomy. Human beings are not mere loci of impulses and responses. They can form maxims, grasp reasons, deliberate about principles, adopt laws for themselves, and hold one another accountable under those laws (Kant, 1996 [1785]). To have dignity is to belong to the class of beings capable of taking a practical standpoint on their own lives as authors of law rather than mere subjects of inclination. Contemporary work on practical identity and the authority of reasons develops this line by arguing that our capacity to bind ourselves by reflective endorsement is the source of a special kind of worth that cannot be traded off against other goods (Korsgaard, 1996).

The core structure is familiar:

- (P1) Beings capable of rational, self legislating agency have a special worth that is not comparable to price.
- (P2) Human beings, as a species, possess this capacity for rational, self legislating agency.
- (C) Therefore, human beings have a special worth, dignity, that grounds stringent duties of respect.

On this view, telos is read off from capacity. The proper end of a rational being is to live in accordance with self given law and mutual recognition as ends in themselves (Kant, 1996 [1785]). Dignity names the status that corresponds to this end.

This picture has several strengths. It explains why dignity cannot be cashed out in market terms, why violations feel like more than bad policy, and why respect for persons occupies a central

place in deontological ethics. It also offers a neat bridge between the metaphysics of agency and the language of rights in contemporary legal and political theory.

2.1.2 The capabilities approach and human flourishing

A second stream, informed by the capabilities approach, shifts focus from a single core power to a plural set of central capabilities. Here, dignity does not hang on one capacity such as rational agency, but on a structured list of functionings that make a human life go well: bodily integrity, practical reason, affiliation, control over one's environment, and so on (Nussbaum, 2000; Nussbaum, 2011). Dignity is violated when persons are deprived of substantive opportunities to exercise these capabilities.

The basic pattern looks like this:

- (P1) There is a plurality of functionings that are constitutive of a life worthy of human beings.
- (P2) These functionings can be captured, at a more abstract level, as central capabilities, that is, real opportunities to be and to do certain things.
- (P3) Political and legal institutions have an obligation to secure at least a threshold level of these capabilities for each person.
- (C) Therefore, respect for human dignity requires that no one be pushed below a threshold of central capabilities (Nussbaum, 2000).

In this family, telos is understood as a space of flourishing rather than a single metaphysical purpose. Dignity marks the claim each person has to inhabit that space above a certain minimum level. Violations of dignity show up, very concretely, as capability deprivation that institutions have a duty to redress (Nussbaum, 2011).

The virtues of this approach are clear. It makes dignity actionable, ties it to institutional duties, and avoids reducing everything to one master capacity such as rationality. It is also more hospitable to cultural pluralism, since different societies can specify and enrich the list while still affirming a shared core.

2.1.3 Interim assessment

Across these variations, capacity based accounts share a crucial axiom:

(CA) Dignity supervenes on the possession of, or membership in, a kind essentially defined by certain capacities or capabilities (Kant, 1996 [1785]; Nussbaum, 2011).

In other words, human beings have dignity because they actually have, or are the sort of beings that have, the relevant powers or opportunities. The explanatory direction runs from capacities, through dignity, to duties. The whole story is meant to remain within the horizon of what can be described and justified in naturalistic or at least intra worldly terms, even when it draws on sophisticated accounts of normativity and practical identity (Korsgaard, 1996).

This axiom will matter later. It is precisely what creates trouble once we move into hard cases and ask whether human dignity can be both inherent and equal across all humans, including those whose capacities are minimal, undeveloped, or permanently absent.

2.2 Evolutionary narratives: dignity and telos as adaptive artefacts

A second family approaches dignity and telos through evolutionary narratives. The core idea is that our moral norms, including the sense that some beings have special status, did not drop from the sky. They are the outcome of long, complex processes of selection in which certain psychological dispositions and social practices proved adaptive (Darwin, 1871; Ruse and Wilson, 1986).

In schematic form, the story can be told like this:

- (P1) Human beings are outcomes of long term evolutionary processes shaped by selection pressures.
- (P2) Cognitive, emotional, and social traits that enhance survival and reproduction tend to be selected for.
- (P3) Norms that treat certain individuals as protected, or as having special standing, can stabilise cooperation and reduce destructive conflict.
- (C1) Therefore, norms of respect, personhood, and even dignity can be understood as evolved artefacts (Ruse and Wilson, 1986).
- (C2) To the extent that these norms still contribute to flourishing and stability, we have reasons, derivative but real, to endorse and refine them.

In this family, telos is interpreted functionally. Hearts are for pumping blood; bees are for pollination in a thin sense; humans are for the clusters of activity and relation that helped them survive and reproduce in ancestral environments (Darwin, 1871). Dignity becomes a high level cognitive device that keeps certain members of the group beyond arbitrary harm and thus supports long term cooperation and trust.

This has obvious attractions. It promises unity between biology and ethics, it deflates metaphysical pathos around dignity, and it suggests a way to criticise and update moral norms in light of empirical findings about human psychology and social evolution. Recent work uses evolutionary considerations to challenge robust moral realism and to question whether strong moral claims can be vindicated given their genealogies (Street, 2006). The question for our purposes, however, is not whether evolutionary narratives can explain how dignity talk arises, but whether they can justify the strong claims we actually make when we appeal to it.

2.3 Contractarian constructions: dignity and telos from fair agreement

A third family roots dignity and telos in fair agreement among free and equal persons. On this view, what ultimately matters is not an underlying metaphysical status or an evolved function, but whether the principles that structure our common life can be justified in terms that no one could reasonably reject. Contractarian and contractualist theories make this idea explicit by constructing models of fair choice or mutual justification (Rawls, 1971; Rawls, 1993; Scanlon, 1998).

The basic scheme is as follows:

- (P1) Norms and institutions are legitimate when they can be justified to each person on the basis of reasons that no one could reasonably reject (Scanlon, 1998).

- (P2) A fair contractual situation models such justification by equalising power and information, for example through a veil of ignorance, ideal discourse, or similar devices (Rawls, 1971; Habermas, 1996).
- (P3) Under such conditions, agents would choose principles that treat each as a free and equal person, protect basic liberties, and secure fair opportunities (Rawls, 1971; Rawls, 1993).
- (C) Therefore, human beings have dignity as free and equal persons who must be treated in accordance with principles that would be chosen in fair agreement and withstand public justification.

Here, telos is not given at the outset as a substantive metaphysical doctrine. It emerges from the structure of fair justification itself. A life that is fitting for a person is one that can be lived under institutions that all could endorse as free and equal, at least in idealised conditions of discourse (Habermas, 1996). Dignity is the name for the status of being owed such justifiability and for the standing each person has as a source of claims in the justificatory process.

This picture is powerful in pluralistic societies. It promises to protect each person without appealing to any particular theology or comprehensive metaphysics, and it integrates dignity with public reason, deliberation, and democratic legitimacy (Rawls, 1993; Habermas, 1996).

2.4 Shared ambitions and structural vulnerabilities

Despite their differences, the three families just surveyed share three ambitions. First, they seek a secular, intra worldly grounding for human dignity and telos, one that does not rely on an authoritative Word that speaks from beyond nature and history. Second, they aim to preserve the strongest elements of contemporary dignity discourse: inherent worth claims, basic equality, and stringent constraints on degrading treatment (Rawls, 1971; Nussbaum, 2011). Third, they aspire to be architecturally self sufficient. Capacities, evolutionary processes, or contracts should be enough to do the grounding work. Logic, assumed to be pure and neutral, then adjudicates whether arguments within these frames are valid.

For the purposes of this article, their shared aspiration can be captured in a conditional:

(N) If dignity and telos can be grounded in capacities, evolution, or contracts alone, then we can retain our strongest moral and legal claims about human dignity without appealing to any authoritative source beyond human reason and nature.

The next step is to test this conditional against what current dignity practice actually presupposes. The remainder of the argument begins by asking whether (N) can survive direct contact with the axioms that already guide our use of dignity language.

3. Minimal human dignity axioms and hard cases

If dignity talk were modest, naturalistic and procedural foundations might be enough. But dignity is not modest. When courts, international instruments, and political movements invoke human dignity, they are typically trying to say something very strong: that certain lives are never expendable, that certain treatments are absolutely ruled out, and that some inequalities cannot be normalised even if they are efficient or popular (United Nations, 1948; Waldron, 2012; Rosen, 2012). To test whether capacity, evolution, and contract can support claims of

this strength, we need to bring into the open what dignity discourse already presupposes, even when it does not say so explicitly.

3.1 Minimal human dignity axioms

The following axioms are not intended as a new theory of the person. They are a reconstruction of the least we seem to be committed to when we use dignity language in law, bioethics, and public policy, as reflected in constitutional texts, human rights charters, and bioethical guidelines (United Nations, 1948; Andorno, 2009). They function as a kind of normative backbone behind the rhetoric.

- **(A1) Inherent worth.**

  Each human being possesses a worth as human that is not a function of current performance, economic value, social recognition, or instrumental usefulness. Losing a job, a role, or a set of abilities does not mean losing worth. This is the intuition behind invocations of dignity as something that persons have prior to and independently of their social status (Rosen, 2012).

- **(A2) Basic equality.**

  There is a basic equality of this worth across all human beings that cannot be overridden by differences in talent, achievement, social role, or moral record. However unequal we may be in other dimensions, we do not form a hierarchy of more and less dignified humans. This is the thought that all humans possess dignity, rather than some having a superior rank that licenses domination (Waldron, 2012).

- **(A3) Non reduction and non instrumentalisation.**

  Human beings must not be reduced to, or treated merely as, instruments, datapoints, or carriers of functions, even when such reduction would increase aggregate goods, stabilise institutions, or serve majorities. This is the core of familiar prohibitions on torture, degrading treatment, and commodification of persons in both human rights law and bioethical codes (United Nations, 1948; Andorno, 2009).

- **(A4) Integrity across time and vulnerability.**

  The worth attached to a human being extends across the entire arc of life and embraces conditions of radical vulnerability: gestation, infancy, severe disability, cognitive decline, and terminal illness. Being fragile, dependent, or costly does not lower one's claim to dignified treatment. This axiom is especially salient in debates on disability, care, and the moral status of those who are profoundly dependent on others (Kittay, 1999).

- **(A5) Coherence, self correction, and accountability.**

  Any institutional order that claims to respect dignity must:

  1. be able to state what that commitment means in publicly accessible language,

2. possess mechanisms to identify and correct violations over time, and
3. expose itself to accountability by those affected and by critical observers, according to its own avowed standards.
   This is implicit in the way courts speak of dignity as a constitutional principle that can be invoked by claimants and as a standard by which policies and technologies are reviewed.

These axioms are not utopian additions to existing practice. They are distilled from the way dignity language is already used when courts strike down degrading penalties, when bioethicists insist on non instrumentalisation in research, and when social movements appeal to an unrecognised worth that law and policy ought to protect (Waldron, 2012; Rosen, 2012). For the rest of the argument, they will serve as a minimal standard: any proposed foundation for dignity that cannot satisfy A1 to A5, especially in hard cases, is not strong enough to underwrite the way we actually use dignity language.

3.2 Hard cases as methodological probes

Abstract argument can hide a great deal of strain. To bring the tensions into clearer focus, it is helpful to look at situations where theory and moral intuition are under pressure. Five kinds of case are especially revealing in contemporary debates on dignity, care, and vulnerability (Kittay, 1999; Nussbaum, 2000):

1. **Infants and those who will never develop central capacities.**

   Newborns, anencephalic infants, and individuals who, due to congenital conditions, will never attain rational agency or autonomous choice.

2. **Severe cognitive impairment and advanced dementia.**

   Persons whose capacities have radically diminished, sometimes to the point where reciprocal communication is impossible, but whose claim to care and protection is intuitively experienced as undiminished by many caregivers and communities (Kittay, 1999).

3. **Economically burdensome lives.**

   Individuals who, in strictly economic terms, consume far more resources than they can ever produce: some chronically ill, severely disabled, or elderly persons, especially in under resourced health systems.

4. **Structurally silenced and institutionally invisible groups.**

   Populations whose voices are effectively excluded from decision making: undocumented migrants, internally displaced communities, and stigmatised minorities under authoritarian or majoritarian regimes.

5. **Future generations.**

Those who will one day exist, and whose lives will be shaped by present choices, but who cannot contract, vote, litigate, or signal preferences now.

In ordinary moral and legal practice, we are reluctant to say that these lives count for less. We tend to affirm that:

- they possess full dignity in the sense of A1 and A2,
- they may not be treated as expendable or purely instrumental, in line with A3,
- their vulnerability or absence does not diminish their claim, as A4 insists, and
- our institutions ought to find ways of representing and protecting their interests, in the spirit of A5.

Hard cases, then, are not marginal anomalies. They are methodological probes. They show whether our foundations can sustain our most serious commitments, or whether those commitments are silently abandoned when the cost is high. Work on dependency and care ethics has long insisted that any adequate account of dignity must pass through these zones of extreme vulnerability rather than assuming idealised, independent agents as the paradigm (Kittay, 1999; Nussbaum, 2000). Accounts that take dependency seriously argue that our moral and political concepts should start from the fact that human beings are dependent rational animals whose lives are structured by asymmetrical caring relations, rather than from an abstract image of the isolated chooser (MacIntyre, 1999; Tronto, 1993). Disability scholarship has likewise challenged frameworks that treat those with significant impairments as marginal test cases instead of central figures for theorising equality and rights (Shakespeare, 2006). If capacity based, evolutionary, or contractarian foundations cannot handle these cases without downgrading the status of the most vulnerable, then they are not strong enough to underwrite the way we actually use dignity language.

3.3 Capacity based accounts under the axioms

On a strict reading, capacity based accounts say that dignity is tied to actual possession of certain capacities or capabilities. Under such a reading, the following pattern quickly appears when we confront the five hard cases:

- Infants, those in permanent coma, and some severely impaired persons do not possess the relevant capacities in any developed form.
- Future generations do not yet possess any capacities at all.
- Certain structurally silenced groups have capacities but lack fair conditions to exercise or express them.

The logical tension can be expressed simply:

- (P1) Dignity supervenes on actual possession of capacity C.
- (P2) Some humans lack C or never will develop C.
- (C) Some humans lack dignity, or possess a lower degree of it.

This conclusion conflicts head on with A1, A2, and A4. It creates two classes of humans at precisely the points where dignity discourse insists that classifying persons by worth is illegitimate. It also sits uneasily with the intuition, central to care ethics, that profound

dependency does not weaken but rather highlights the claims of the dependent on the moral community (Kittay, 1999).

To avoid these exclusionary implications, capacity theorists often appeal to potentiality or kind membership. They say, in effect, that even if individual X does not now manifest capacity C, X belongs to a kind whose normal members do, and it is this kind membership, not current performance, that carries dignity (Kant, 1996 [1785]; Nussbaum, 2011). But this move quietly changes the story. Dignity is no longer grounded directly in the individual's present capacities. It now rests on what this kind of being is for by nature. That is, it leans on a teleological understanding of human beings: there is a way a human life is meant to go, and this meant to status does first order normative work.

At this point, capacity based accounts approach the very terrain they usually want to avoid. They begin to depend on a vertically anchored view of human nature and purpose that is not supplied by a purely naturalistic description of capacities. In other words, they start to speak, without explicitly saying so, as if some word about what humans are and what they are for is already in place and binding.

On A5, capacity based accounts perform unevenly. They can inspire institutions that track and support the development of key capacities and capabilities, and they give content to social and economic rights understood as capability thresholds (Nussbaum, 2000). But if dignity is conceptually tied to capacity, institutions may be tempted, under pressure, to treat those whose capacities are minimal or costly as candidates for lesser protection. When that happens, A3 and A4 are betrayed in practice even if they remain affirmed in official rhetoric.

3.4 Evolutionary narratives under the axioms

Evolutionary narratives have a different shape. They do not typically exclude anyone from moral consideration as a matter of conceptual design. Their difficulty lies in reconciling contingent functional explanations with unconditional normative claims.

From an evolutionary perspective, it can be entirely intelligible that a community under severe resource pressure would adopt norms that deprioritise or sacrifice members who are very costly to maintain and unlikely to contribute to survival. That does not mean such norms are inevitable or morally acceptable. It simply means that, in evolutionary terms, there is nothing incoherent about them. Studies in evolutionary ethics explicitly explore how dispositions to fairness, reciprocity, or limited altruism could have emerged under selection pressures without assuming any independent moral truth (Ruse and Wilson, 1986; Street, 2006).

When we say, however, that it is wrong in principle to abandon severely disabled infants, to treat undocumented migrants as disposable, or to ignore the interests of distant future generations for the sake of present advantage, we are not claiming that such practices are maladaptive or destabilising. We are saying that they violate an inviolable status, even if they might in some scenarios increase fitness or stability.

Put schematically:

- Evolutionary explanation yields claims of the form:
  (E) In environment E, strategy S tends to outperform strategy S' in terms of fitness or stability.
- Dignity axioms require claims of the form:
  (D) For any environment E, if strategy S violates inherent worth and basic equality, then S is impermissible, even if S outperforms S'.

There is a clear gap between (E) and (D). No amount of evolutionary elaboration, as such, will produce (D) without importing a normative premise about what may not be done to persons regardless of adaptive payoff. Hard cases make this gap vivid. It can be locally advantageous, in a thin evolutionary sense, for a group under stress to discard burdensome members. To say that such a strategy is morally ruled out is to step outside the evolutionary register and into a different normative horizon.

On A5, evolutionary frameworks can model feedback and norm revision: groups learn from the long term consequences of their practices and adjust norms accordingly. The metric for better, however, remains functional: greater stability, cohesion, or reproductive success. There is no built in place for a word that can say that an entire pattern is fundamentally wrong because of what these persons are, even if it is locally adaptive. To reach that judgment is already to move beyond a purely evolutionary story.

3.5 Contractarian constructions under the axioms

Contractarian constructions are, at first sight, more promising. They are designed to express equality and to guard against domination by insisting that principles must be justifiable to each person as free and equal (Rawls, 1971; Scanlon, 1998). Yet when we bring hard cases and axioms A1 to A5 into view, a familiar pattern reappears.

Contractual dignity typically attaches to persons as parties to fair agreement or as those to whom justifying reasons must be addressed. Infants, persons with profound cognitive impairment, and future generations are not parties in any literal sense. Their inclusion depends on additional moves: allowing representatives, building their protection into what reasonable contractors would choose behind a veil of ignorance, or appealing to separate moral intuitions about who must be counted (Rawls, 1971; Habermas, 1996).

In each case, the contract presupposes, rather than generates, a prior judgment that these beings are owed justification as a matter of principle. That judgment is functionally equivalent to A1 and A2. It says that certain humans cannot be excluded from moral standing even if they cannot meet the formal criteria of partyhood. This is not a weakness of contractarianism as such; it is a sign that its deepest commitments lean on a thicker background about who humans are and what may not be done to them.

A second difficulty concerns A3. Suppose there exists a stable equilibrium in which all actual contractors are willing to accept principles that allow harsh treatment of certain marginalised groups, as long as their own interests are secured. From a purely procedural standpoint, such an equilibrium might be perfectly coherent. To rule it out as unjust, the theory must appeal to a substantive constraint: certain ways of treating humans are beyond the pale whatever contractors might be willing to accept, even under idealised conditions (Scanlon, 1998;

Habermas, 1996). That constraint looks very much like a vertical standard, not a mere product of contract.

Finally, on A5, contractarian theories offer rich resources for publicity, justification, and revisability. Where they struggle is with those who cannot yet or no longer can be parties and with future generations who cannot raise claims now. Duties to such parties inevitably reach beyond the logic of mutual justifiability among existing agents and point again toward a prior word or horizon within which some beings must be regarded as claim holders irrespective of their contractual status.

3.6 Interim conclusion

The picture that emerges is strikingly uniform. Capacity based accounts either exclude hard cases or transform themselves into teleological theories. Evolutionary narratives can explain how dignity norms arise and stabilise, but cannot, by themselves, support their unconditional force. Contractarian constructions articulate equality and justification, but quietly rely on prior judgments about who counts and what may not be done to them.

The conclusion is not that these approaches are useless. They capture important truths about the importance of human powers, the history of moral norms, and the centrality of justification in modern law and politics. But as foundations for the strongest dignity claims we make, they are incomplete. They live, often unknowingly, off a thicker normative horizon that they do not articulate.

The picture that emerges is not one of minor, local difficulties. It is the outline of a shared dependence on a thicker normative horizon that none of these accounts is willing to name. The pressing question, therefore, is what sort of source must already be presupposed for axioms A1 to A5 to make sense at all, and how that source can be brought into view without abandoning logical rigor. In what follows I call this source Sabda and begin to sketch the architecture within which it can be engaged.

4. Hidden dependence on a thicker normative source

The three families of accounts we have just surveyed do not fail everywhere. They capture genuine insights. Capacity based theories remind us that powers of understanding, choice, and relational life do matter. Evolutionary accounts explain why certain moral sensibilities appear and stabilise. Contractarian approaches discipline our intuitions by asking what can be justified to each person. The problem is not that these frameworks are wrong in everything they say. The problem is that they are silently leaning on something they officially refuse to name.

Rather than treating this as an embarrassment to be covered over with technical refinements, we can take it as a clue. The repeated need to borrow from a thicker normative horizon suggests that there is an underlying architectural gap, a missing layer in the picture of how dignity and telos are grounded. The question is not whether capacity, evolution, and contract can be patched up, but what sort of source they already presuppose when they try to do justice to our strongest dignity commitments.

4.1 From scattered repairs to a unified diagnosis

We can see the pattern more clearly by lining up the typical repair moves side by side.

Capacity based accounts, when pressed on infants and those who will never develop central capacities, shift from actual performance to potentiality or kind membership. They say, in effect, that this is the kind of being that is ordered toward rational life, even if it will never realise it. That is a teleological claim. It treats human beings as having an intrinsic orientation, a for the sake of which, that is not simply a summary of current functions.

Evolutionary narratives, when confronted with practices that are adaptive but morally abhorrent, do not stop at description. They say that even if such a practice might have been locally advantageous, it would still be wrong. That still does not come from evolutionary fitness. It comes from a judgment that there is a way of treating persons that is simply not permitted, whatever the adaptive calculus says.

Contractarian constructions, when faced with the possibility that a stable and consensual order might degrade some members, respond by insisting that some beings must be treated as bearers of claims even if they cannot participate in the contract on equal terms. Again, this must is not produced by the contract itself. It expresses a prior conviction about who counts and what may not be done to them.

Across these cases, the underlying movement is similar. Each theory moves from its official grounding story, capacities, evolution, or contracts, to something else:

- a view of what human beings are and what they are for,
- a sense that some practices are wrong in themselves,
- a conviction that some beings cannot be excluded from moral standing.

These something elses are rarely developed. They appear as passing gestures, as if they were small auxiliary premises. Yet their logical role is far from small. They are doing the work that allows the theory to pretend that it can sustain axioms A1 to A5 on naturalistic and procedural grounds alone.

4.2 Making the implicit premise explicit

We can now state the situation more directly. When contemporary theories insist on inherent worth, basic equality, non instrumentalisation, integrity across vulnerability, and accountable self correction, they are implicitly committed to at least three claims.

First, **given worth**. Human beings have a worth that is given rather than constructed. It is not manufactured by capacities, contracts, or evolutionary history, even if these shape how the worth is recognised and protected.

Second, **non negotiable constraints**. There are ways of treating humans that are ruled out in principle, even when they are functional, stable, or preferred by majorities. In other words, there is a standard of right and wrong that is not reducible to equilibria of interest or fitness.

Third, **priority over recognition**. Recognition, agreement, and institutional status do not create dignity. They answer to it. A legal order can therefore be judged as unjust, not just as unstable, when it systematically misrecognises human worth.

Taken together, these claims describe a source of norm and telos with three features. It has priority over human capacities, histories, and agreements. It has authority to bind agents and institutions even against their interests. It is articulable, in the sense that it can be spoken, interpreted, and appealed to in critique.

Call this the missing tier, the tier above capacities, evolution, and contracts that makes our strongest dignity talk intelligible. So long as it remains implicit, naturalistic and procedural theories will oscillate between under ambitious conclusions and over ambitious rhetoric. They will either scale down dignity to fit their resources, or they will make claims they cannot defend without smuggling in precisely the kind of normative source they wish to exclude.

4.3 Beyond shared values and thin humanity

At this point, it might be tempting to say that the missing tier consists of nothing more than shared values or a thin idea of humanity. That response, however, underestimates the strength of axioms A1 to A4. Shared values explain convergence in practice; they do not by themselves justify claims that some practices are wrong even if everyone endorses them. A thin idea of humanity tends to collapse back into capacities, species membership, or social recognition, and we have already seen how fragile those are in hard cases.

The kind of source that can bear the weight of A1 to A4 must have a stronger profile. It must speak about all humans as such, not just members of particular groups. It must apply with non contingent force, so that its verdicts do not merely track local advantage. It must carry orientation, in the sense that it does not just say that humans matter, but also what they are for. It must be capable of judging even long standing, widely accepted orders.

Historically, when movements against slavery, colonialism, or systemic racism have appealed to dignity, they have spoken as if there were a word about human beings that existing orders had betrayed. They have not merely said that we now prefer different norms. They have said that what has been done was always wrong, even when law and custom said otherwise. That is the tone of a norm and telos giving word, not of a shifting consensus.

4.4 Naming the source: Sabda

The argument so far has been structural. It has not yet committed us to any particular religious tradition or doctrine. It has only brought into view the contours of a source that contemporary dignity talk already presupposes.

At this point, a name can be proposed for this source:

Sabda, understood as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos.

Sabda here does not mean a single sentence or a single text. It designates a mode of address, a speaking that does not simply describe how things are, but declares how they ought to be and what they are for. Sabda is revelatory in the sense that it discloses what is not available from

capacities, evolutionary histories, or contracts alone, namely that humans have a given worth, that some treatments are absolutely ruled out, and that there is a purpose to human life that is not exhausted by functional roles.

Crucially, Sabda is not introduced as an arbitrary dogmatic insertion into an otherwise neutral space. It is the explicit naming of a premise that capacity, evolutionary, and contractarian theories already rely on in fragmentary and unexamined ways. Once it is named, however, a further task emerges. Claims made in the name of Sabda can themselves be distorted, instrumentalised, or co opted by power. Sabda must therefore be embedded in an architecture that both honours its authority and subjects concrete interpretations of it to disciplined scrutiny.

That is the role of The Cohesive Tetrad, to which we turn after addressing one more obstacle, the widespread belief that even if morality needs Sabda, pure logic does not.

5. The self limitation of pure logic and the epistemic priority of Sabda

Up to this point, the pressure on naturalistic and procedural foundations has come mainly from the side of dignity and telos. Capacity, evolution, and contract could not, on their own, sustain axioms A1 to A5 without leaning on a thicker normative source. Once Sabda is named as that source, however, a further objection becomes visible. Even if morality needs something like Sabda, the objector says, logic does not. Logic is supposed to be a formal enterprise that can stand on its own feet. It may need axioms, but those axioms are simply given within the system; they do not depend on any external word about what humans are and what they are for.

In this section, I argue that this confidence in the self sufficiency of pure logic is misplaced. The point is not to undermine logic or to deny its necessity. The point is to show that even logic, when taken seriously as an activity of reasoning creatures who care about truth and coherence, depends on a prior horizon of norm and telos. That horizon is precisely the kind of thing that Sabda is meant to name.

5.1 Logic cannot justify its own axioms

Every logical system begins somewhere. It has basic laws or axioms, rules of inference, and background assumptions about meaning. Within a given system, much can be done. One can prove theorems, derive consequences, and show that certain patterns of inference are valid. What the system cannot do, on its own, is justify its own starting points without circularity.

If we ask why we should accept, for example, a principle of non contradiction, or a rule like modus ponens, several kinds of answer are available. We can say that these principles are self evident, that they are pragmatically indispensable, that they are built into our concept of assertion, or that they are vindicated by their success in organising scientific practice. None of these answers is itself a purely logical derivation. Each appeals to something beyond formal consequence relations: to intuition, to practice, to meaning, to empirical success.

The point can be put more sharply. Within a given logic L, one cannot prove that L is correct without presupposing some standard of correctness that is at least as strong as L. Attempting to prove the reliability of L using L simply chases its own tail. Switching to a different logic L' just repeats the pattern at a higher level. In this sense, logic is parasitic on extra logical

commitments about what counts as a good reason, a genuine contradiction, or a successful representation of reality.

This does not mean that anything goes. There can be better and worse arguments for adopting one logical framework rather than another. It does mean that the authority of logic as such is not self grounding. It stands in need of a wider normative horizon that says why these ways of inferring and not others are binding on creatures like us.

5.2 Logic cannot generate the epistemic "ought"

A second limitation concerns normativity. Logic describes valid transitions from premises to conclusions. If the premises are true, then the conclusions must be true as well. Yet the step from this conditional to the claim that we ought to care about such transitions is not itself a piece of logic. It is an epistemic and, in a broad sense, ethical claim.

Consider a simple inference: from "all humans are mortal" and "Socrates is human" to "Socrates is mortal." Logic tells us that the third sentence is a consequence of the first two. It does not tell us that we ought to believe the conclusion, or that we are at fault if we persist in ignoring it. To say that we should align our beliefs with valid consequence, or that it is irrational to affirm the premises and deny the conclusion, is already to invoke a standard of good and bad believing.

Debates about the normativity of logic make this point in different technical ways, but the underlying intuition is straightforward. Logical consequence has a kind of binding force for agents who see themselves as answerable to truth. That binding force is not created by the formal relation between sentences. It comes from the fact that we take ourselves to be under an obligation to respond appropriately to such relations if we care about getting things right.

Once again, this is not a reason to distrust logic. It is a reason to see that logic presupposes an epistemic "ought" that it does not itself generate. To be a reasoner at all, let alone a good one, is to stand under norms of believing, inferring, and revising that are not reducible to the shape of formal rules. The decision to treat valid consequence as binding is not a theorem. It is a commitment about what kind of creatures we are and what kind of stance toward truth we are called to adopt.

5.3 Logic is blind to telos and content

A third limitation concerns telos. Logic works at the level of form. It tells us that if premises of a certain shape are true, then conclusions of a related shape must be true as well. What it does not do is evaluate the moral or teleological quality of those contents. Valid inferences can lead from deeply unjust premises to deeply unjust conclusions without any violation of logical law.

This content blindness is both a strength and a danger. It is a strength because it allows logic to be used across domains. The same inferential patterns can apply in mathematics, physics, law, and everyday reasoning. It is a danger because it can give a false sense of moral neutrality to systems that are, in fact, saturated with value laden assumptions.

In the context of contemporary AI, this danger is particularly acute. Machine learning systems and other forms of automated reasoning are, in effect, large scale engines of pattern extraction and inference. They take inputs, apply rules or learned models, and produce outputs that can have profound effects on human lives. The logics at work in these systems, whether symbolic or statistical, do not by themselves discriminate between teloi. They can be used to optimise profit, to minimise crime, to target advertisements, or to allocate welfare benefits, depending on the objective functions they are given.

If the objectives themselves are morally distorted, the fact that the system reasons correctly from its inputs to its outputs is not reassuring. On the contrary, it can magnify injustice. A system that infers flawlessly from biased data to biased decisions is more dangerous, not less, precisely because it wraps its harms in the aura of technical correctness.

This is the practical face of logic's content blindness. Logical validity is compatible with profound moral failure. To distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable uses of logical power, we need criteria that are not delivered by logic alone. We need standards of what may and may not be pursued, of who may and may not be treated in certain ways, and of what human lives are for.

5.4 Logic under Sabda, not against it

If logic cannot justify its own axioms without circularity, cannot generate the epistemic "ought" that makes validity binding, and cannot see the telos or moral quality of the contents it links, then its authority is in a specific sense derivative. Logic is indispensable for articulating, testing, and clarifying claims, including claims about dignity and about Sabda. Yet the decision to treat logic as binding, and the determination of what ends logical power should serve, already presuppose a prior horizon of norm and purpose.

Sabda names that horizon at the deepest level. As Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, Sabda can be understood as the source that:

- calls human beings to care about truth rather than falsehood,
- commands coherence between what is said, what is believed, and what is done,
- declares that some ways of treating persons are ruled out in principle,
- orients the telos of reasoning toward justice and the protection of the vulnerable, rather than toward domination or mere efficiency.

Understood in this way, Sabda does not compete with logic on the same plane. It does not ask us to abandon valid inference or to ignore contradictions. It tells us why we must treat valid inference as binding in the first place, and how we must evaluate the uses to which inferential power is put. Sabda judges both our premises and our goals, and therefore also judges the systems of reasoning that connect them.

This has two implications for the architecture of truth governance. First, Sabda must have epistemic priority over pure logic. When there is a conflict between technically correct inferences and the demands of inherent worth, basic equality, and non instrumentalisation as disclosed by Sabda, it is the latter that must prevail. Second, Sabda must be brought into disciplined relation with logic, rather than left as a vague background. It must be articulated in

ways that can be evaluated for coherence, it must be heard in the experiences of those affected by our systems, and it must be traced in the long term moral consequences of our decisions.

The next step, therefore, is architectural. If Sabda is to ground human dignity and telos without turning into a tool of arbitrary power, it must be embedded in a structure that keeps logic, experience, spiritual orientation, moral character, and historical trace in living connection. That is the task of The Cohesive Tetrad.

6. Sabda within The Cohesive Tetrad: an architecture for dignity and telos

Once Sabda is no longer left in the shadows but named as *Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos*, a familiar worry arises. Words that claim authority can be weaponised. In the history of law, politics, and religion, appeals to a higher Word have sometimes legitimised precisely the kinds of degradation and exclusion that dignity language is meant to resist. If Sabda is to do real work in grounding human dignity and telos, it cannot simply be placed on a pedestal and insulated from critique. It needs an architecture that honours its primacy while subjecting claims made in its name to disciplined scrutiny.

That is the role of **The Cohesive Tetrad**. It is not a new metaphysical superstructure added on top of existing theories. It is a way of organising the pursuit and governance of truth so that Sabda, logic, experience, spiritual orientation, moral character, and historical trace are held together rather than drifting apart.

6.1 The six registers of The Cohesive Tetrad

In its most compact form, The Cohesive Tetrad comprises four core registers and two diagnostic dimensions.

1. **Sabda.**
   Sabda is *Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos*. It speaks not only about what is factually the case, but about what ought to be and what humans are for. Sabda confers worth, names constraints, and discloses human telos.
2. **Logic.**
   Logic is the disciplined use of inference and conceptual analysis to test coherence, draw out implications, and expose contradictions. Logic does not create normativity. It helps us see whether our claims, including claims about Sabda, hold together.
3. **Qualia.**
   Qualia is the lived experience of persons and communities under particular norms, institutions, and technologies. It is the register in which those subject to a regime can say, in effect, "this is what it feels like to live under your laws, your policies, your code." Qualia brings into view fear, humiliation, security, trust, and cohesion as they are actually experienced.
4. **Mistika.**
   Mistika is *Mistika, the intentional-spiritual dimension of journeying toward direct encounter with the transcendent*. It concerns the direction of the heart and mind. Mistika asks whether agents and communities are genuinely oriented toward truth and accountability before a higher Word, or whether they are using moral and religious language to cloak self interest.

5. **Akhlak.**
   Akhlak is the observable configuration of moral dispositions and practices at both individual and institutional levels. It is what appears when we watch how people actually act, not only what they say they believe. Patterns of honesty or manipulation, mercy or cruelty, patience or violence, show up here.
6. **Intention-Trace Alignment.**
   Intention-Trace Alignment is *the degree of alignment between epistemic intention and epistemic-moral trace* over time. It is not enough to profess noble intentions. We must ask whether the long term trace of decisions, documents, budgets, and infrastructures matches what was promised.

Taken together, these six registers form an **epistemic ethical circuit**. Sabda provides the normative and teleological centre. Logic organises and tests articulation. Qualia and Akhlak reveal how those articulations land in lived reality. Mistika interrogates the orientation of those who speak in the name of Sabda. Intention-Trace Alignment asks, again and again, whether the overall trajectory of a person, community, or institution is converging on or drifting away from its professed commitments.

6.2 How Sabda secures the dignity axioms

Within this architecture, Sabda performs a precise set of functions for human dignity and telos.

First, Sabda grounds **inherent worth and basic equality** (A1 and A2). On the account developed here, worth is not a statistical summary of capacities, contributions, or social esteem. It is a status conferred by how Sabda speaks of human beings. Sabda addresses each human person as a bearer of worth that is not earned and cannot be lost by failure or fragility. At the same time, it does so without gradation. There are not "more" and "less" addressed humans. This is what basic equality means when taken seriously, not as a rhetorical flourish.

Second, Sabda clarifies **human telos** in a way that sustains A4. By speaking about what humans are for, Sabda allows us to interpret life stages and conditions that look unproductive from a purely functional standpoint. Infancy, disability, illness, and dependence are not zones in which dignity is suspended. They are modes of existing under the same Word, with the same telos, even if the ways in which that telos is expressed differ from those of health or strength.

Third, Sabda establishes **non negotiable constraints** (A3). It names forms of treatment that are incompatible with what humans are and what they are for, regardless of the benefits they might bring to others. Slavery, torture, systematic humiliation, and the deliberate erasure of some groups from public concern are not just maladaptive or unstable. They are betrayals of Sabda's description of persons.

Fourth, Sabda underwrites **accountability and self correction** (A5). Because Sabda is a Word that can be invoked not only by rulers but also by the ruled, it provides a standard by which institutions can be judged from within their own normative horizon. When a state, a court, or a corporation claims to honour human dignity, Sabda functions as the criterion that allows victims and witnesses to say, "you have named this Word, but your practices contradict it."

In short, Sabda does the work that capacities, evolution, and contracts could not do on their own. It confers given worth, fixes non negotiable boundaries, and orients human life toward a telos that is not exhausted by adaptive success or mutual agreement.

6.3 The other registers as checks on claims about Sabda

If this were all, The Cohesive Tetrad would still be vulnerable to the familiar charge of authoritarianism. Anyone could claim to speak for Sabda and use that claim to close down argument. The crucial feature of the Tetrad is that it **refuses to sacralise any particular human interpretation** of Sabda. Instead, it forces such interpretations into contact with the other registers.

- **Logic** asks whether a claimed reading of Sabda is coherent with the rest of what is said and done. A supposed "Sabda" that legitimises degrading treatment of some humans will clash immediately with axioms A1 to A4 and with other affirmations about worth and equality. Logical analysis does not decide whether the Word is true. It tests whether those who invoke it are consistent.
- **Qualia** brings in the voices and experiences of those under Sabda shaped norms. If a community proclaims that a legal or technological order honours human dignity, but those subject to it report fear, humiliation, or invisibility, there is a gap between profession and reality that cannot be ignored. Sabda does not float above such testimony. It is often in the cries of the afflicted that its judgment is most sharply heard.
- **Mistika** probes intention and orientation. Are leaders and institutions genuinely seeking to be answerable to a higher Word, or are they using the language of Sabda to secure their own position. This is not a mystical ornament. It is recognition that normativity and power are always entangled, and that the integrity of appeal to Sabda depends on the inner direction of those who speak it.
- **Akhlak** asks the oldest diagnostic question: what kind of character does this teaching produce. If repeated appeals to Sabda lead, in practice, to arrogance, domination, and indifference to the vulnerable, something has gone wrong. Conversely, patterns of patience, humility, courage, and mercy are not conclusive proof that an interpretation is correct, but they are not irrelevant either.
- **Intention-Trace Alignment** finally checks the long term trajectory. Institutions, like persons, can tell compelling stories about their intentions. The Tetrad demands a harder test: do the historical traces, the policies enacted, budgets allocated, technologies deployed, align with the stated commitment to human dignity under Sabda, or do they drift away from it.

Through this multi register scrutiny, The Cohesive Tetrad holds two things at once. It affirms the **primacy of Sabda** in conferring norm and telos, and it acknowledges the **fallibility of human readings** of that Sabda. The framework is designed less as a fortress for dogma than as a circuit of ongoing discernment in which Word, logic, experience, spirit, character, and history continually confront one another.

6.4 From architecture to practice: law, public policy, and AI

The language of registers and alignment can sound abstract. It is therefore important to see how the architecture of The Cohesive Tetrad might function in practice.

In **constitutional law**, a court that explicitly recognises Sabda as grounding dignity could still be tempted to interpret dignity in narrow, capacity based, or majoritarian terms. Under the Tetrad, such a court would be required to:

- articulate its reading of Sabda and dignity in precise, logically analysable form,
- listen to the lived experiences (Qualia) of those at the margins of its jurisdiction,
- examine the institutional culture (Akhlak) of the judiciary, asking whether it is one of humility and service or of self protection,
- and ask, over decades, whether landmark judgments and legal reforms, the trace of its work, actually converge on greater protection for the most vulnerable or subtly retract it.

In **public policy**, especially under resource constraints, the architecture resists the slide from cost benefit calculations to the quiet normalisation of discardable lives. It does so not by banning cost benefit analysis, but by insisting that such analysis operates under the constraints set by Sabda's declarations about who may not be sacrificed and what may not be traded away. Policies that treat some humans as expendable for aggregate gain would fail both the Sabda test and the tests of Qualia, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment.

In **artificial intelligence governance**, The Cohesive Tetrad becomes particularly salient. AI systems are paradigmatic embodiments of pure logic and data driven patterning. Without an architecture like the Tetrad, there is a real risk that AI will become the most efficient mechanism yet devised for formalising and amplifying existing injustices. Under the Tetrad, however, AI development and deployment would be subject to:

- **Sabda informed constraints** on how persons may be represented and treated,
- continuous monitoring of **Qualia**, by attending to how those most affected experience AI mediated decisions,
- scrutiny of institutional **Akhlak**, asking whether organisations deploying AI exhibit honesty, humility, and responsiveness,
- evaluation of designers' and regulators' **Mistika**, in the sense of their genuine orientation toward truth and accountability,
- and long term assessment of **Intention-Trace Alignment**, checking whether the actual social and moral trace of AI systems matches the human centric commitments proclaimed at their launch.

In each of these domains, the claim is not that Sabda replaces law, policy, or technical expertise. It is that without something like Sabda, integrated into a wider architecture of truth governance, our strongest talk of human dignity and telos floats above practices that, under pressure, will always be tempted to turn people back into instruments. The Cohesive Tetrad offers one way of preventing that drift by placing Sabda at the centre of a disciplined circuit that binds logic and data to a prior word about what humans are and what must never be done to them.

7. Implications and conclusion

The argument of this article began from a tension in our contemporary use of human dignity and human telos. On the surface, we speak as if every human being has an inherent and equal worth that no loss of capacity or social status can erase, and as if certain treatments of persons are ruled out in principle even when they are efficient or popular. In the background, however,

we often rely on naturalistic and procedural foundations that cannot sustain claims of this strength. Capacity based, evolutionary, and contractarian accounts, even when refined and combined, turn out to lean on a thicker normative source that they do not thematise. Once this dependence is made explicit, the picture of truth governance changes.

7.1 Rethinking foundations of human dignity and telos

The first implication is conceptual. If the analysis of Sections 2 to 4 is sound, then much of the current literature on dignity and telos must revise its self description. Capacity based theories do not merely elaborate the moral significance of rational agency and central capabilities. In order to include the most vulnerable without dilution, they rely on implicit teleological judgments about what humans are for. Evolutionary narratives do not simply explain the emergence of moral sensibilities. When they condemn practices that may be locally adaptive but degrading, they presuppose a norm that stands above adaptive success. Contractarian constructions do not only model fair agreement. When they insist that some beings must be treated as claim holders even if they cannot be parties, they reach beyond the space of contract.

The shared pattern is a movement from modest premises to robust conclusions that require more than capacities, evolution, or contracts can deliver on their own. Minimal dignity axioms A1 to A5 make this movement visible by asking theories to show how they handle the hardest cases without abandoning inherent worth, basic equality, non instrumentalisation, integrity across vulnerability, and accountable self correction. When the answers depend on premises that look very much like a given worth and a given telos, it is no longer honest to describe the framework as purely naturalistic or procedural.

Naming Sabda as *Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos* is one way of acknowledging this dependence. The proposal is not that every existing theory must suddenly endorse a particular scriptural tradition. It is that, insofar as we want to keep speaking in the strongest possible register about human dignity and telos, we must admit that our language presupposes something like a Word that confers worth, declares constraints, and orients human life. The choice is not between secular neutrality and religious intrusion. It is between silently borrowing from a Word we refuse to name and openly bringing that Sabda into the argument so that its content and claims can be examined.

7.2 Truth governance under Sabda for law, public policy, and AI

The second implication concerns practice. Introducing Sabda into the foundations of dignity would be irresponsible if it simply licensed new forms of dogmatism. The point of The Cohesive Tetrad is precisely to prevent this outcome by embedding Sabda in an architecture of truth governance that also includes Logic, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment.

In law, this architecture invites courts to move beyond thin references to dignity as a residual value. Sabda gives content to inherent worth and basic equality. Logic forces coherence between constitutional principles and concrete judgments. Qualia and Akhlak expose how legal doctrines are experienced at the margins and what kind of institutional character they cultivate. Intention-Trace Alignment prevents self congratulatory narratives from ignoring the long term effects of legal decisions on those who are most vulnerable. Under such an arrangement,

dignity talk is no longer an ornamental clause. It becomes a disciplined way of holding legal orders to a Word that they publicly claim to honour.

In public policy, the Tetrad resists the tendency to slide from cost benefit reasoning to quiet sacrifice of costly lives. Sabda sets outer limits on what may be done to human beings. Logic helps clarify trade offs within those limits. Qualia, Akhlak, and Mistika reveal whether policymaking cultures are genuinely oriented toward protecting the vulnerable or toward obscuring their suffering behind aggregated indicators. Intention-Trace Alignment forces governments to track the moral as well as economic footprint of their choices over time.

In artificial intelligence, the need for such an architecture is acute. Data driven and logically structured systems can produce decisions that are both formally impeccable and substantively unjust. Sabda provides a non negotiable horizon against which the objectives and constraints of AI systems must be tested. Logic and data are then placed in service of, rather than above, that horizon. Qualia and Akhlak bring to the surface how AI mediated decisions are lived by those they classify, rank, or exclude. Mistika and Intention-Trace Alignment ask whether the long term trajectory of AI infrastructures is converging on deeper protection of human dignity or on more efficient management of expendable lives. Without such a framework, the language of human centric and dignity preserving AI risks becoming another rhetorical covering for technically sophisticated forms of instrumentalisation.

The conceptual and practical message converge at a single point. If dignity and telos are to remain more than decor, Sabda must have epistemic priority over pure logic and over the institutionalisation of logical systems in law, policy, and technology. That priority does not license the rejection of logic. It forbids the worship of logic as an ultimate authority that answers to no higher norm.

7.3 Limitations and further work

The argument presented here is intentionally programmatic. It traces the dependence of several dominant foundations for human dignity and telos on a thicker normative source, proposes Sabda as a name for that source, and sketches The Cohesive Tetrad as an architecture in which Sabda can be integrated into truth governance without collapsing into arbitrary rule. Several important questions remain open.

First, the analysis has been conducted at a high level of abstraction. Different religious and philosophical traditions understand the Word, human nature, and telos in divergent ways. A full account would need to explore how Sabda, as defined here, can be received, interpreted, and contested in plural contexts without either dissolving into a lowest common denominator or hardening into an exclusionary dogma. This requires sustained work in comparative theology, political philosophy, and legal theory.

Second, the article has not offered a detailed methodology for implementing The Cohesive Tetrad in specific institutional settings. Translating the six registers into concrete procedures, indicators, and review mechanisms in courts, ministries, regulatory bodies, and AI labs is a task for further research. Such work will need to respect the differences between domains while maintaining the core insight that Sabda, logic, experience, spiritual orientation, character, and historical trace must be held together.

Third, there is a need for critical engagement with those who reject the very idea of a norm and telos giving Word. Some may argue that dignity talk should be weakened rather than supported by Sabda, that the cost of maintaining the strongest claims is too high. Others may try to preserve strong dignity language within a reconstructed naturalism. These counter positions are not only predictable but necessary. They will help clarify whether the dependence diagnosed in this article is as deep as it appears.

Despite these limitations, the main conclusion can be stated simply. If we intend to keep saying that every human being has an inherent and equal worth, that some treatments of persons are absolutely excluded, and that our institutions must be judged by how they protect the most vulnerable across time, then we cannot remain within the comfort of purely naturalistic and procedural foundations. We must acknowledge the presence of a Word that speaks about what humans are and what they are for, and we must build structures that bind our reasoning, our technologies, and our laws to that Word.

The Cohesive Tetrad is one proposal for such a structure. It does not resolve all disagreements about Sabda, dignity, or telos. It does, however, insist that these disagreements be conducted in the open, under conditions where claims about human worth are tested not only by internal coherence, but also by their capacity to protect real human beings from being turned back into expendable instruments under the smooth surface of logic and data.

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Sabda, Public Reason, and Plural Societies: The Cohesive Tetrad as an Architecture for Democratic Truth Governance

Abstract

Contemporary democracies rely heavily on the language of human dignity, rights, and the public good when they justify laws and policies, yet their dominant models of public reason are designed to keep explicit appeals to Sabda, understood here as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, at arm's length from the structure of public justification (Rawls 1993, 1997; Habermas 1996, 2006). Building on previous work that developed The Cohesive Tetrad as a framework for truth governance and argued that pure logic, human capacities, evolution, and social contracts are insufficient to ground the strongest dignity claims in law and policy (Mutaqin 2025a, 2025b; Waldron 2012; Nussbaum 2006), this article makes three moves. First, it reconstructs Rawlsian, Habermasian, and liberal neutrality models of public reason and shows that, under pressure from minimal dignity axioms, they tend to drift toward either empty secularism, in which democratic procedures remain but the horizon of norm and telos becomes hollow, or fearful theocracy, in which one interpretation of Sabda is elevated into a political authority insulated from correction (Taylor 2007; Forst 2012; Casanova 1994). Second, it articulates The Cohesive Tetrad as a six register architecture for democratic truth governance built around Sabda, Logic, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment, the degree of alignment between epistemic intention and epistemic moral trace, and redefines public reason as a multi register practice in which all claims about coercive laws pass through these registers under the conditions of universality of address, non coercion of conscience, accountable interpretation, and protection of dissent (Fraser 1990, 2008; Forst 2012; MacIntyre 1981). Third, it applies this architecture to stylised cases in bioethics, social policy, and artificial intelligence governance, contrasting the outcomes it yields with those of empty secularism and fearful theocracy (Kittay 1999; Fineman 2008; Pellegrino 1999; O'Neil 2016; Eubanks 2018). The result is a model of democratic truth governance under Sabda that preserves core liberal achievements while providing a more stable grounding for strong dignity claims in plural societies and preparing the way for a subsequent analysis of law and artificial intelligence.

Keywords: *Sabda; human dignity; public reason; pluralism; democratic truth governance; The Cohesive Tetrad; artificial intelligence; secularism; theocracy.*

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1. Introduction

Contemporary democracies speak fluently in the language of human dignity, rights, and the public good. Constitutions announce the inherent worth of every person, courts invoke dignity to decide hard cases, and policy documents routinely justify interventions by appealing to the protection of vulnerable lives (Waldron 2012; Andorno 2013; Nussbaum 2006). This vocabulary is not merely ornamental. It carries heavy normative weight, especially when societies dispute questions at the limit of life and death, social inclusion, and technological control.

At the same time, in many democracies the deepest moral energy that animates public struggles for justice and protection of the vulnerable is explicitly grounded in religious traditions and in claims to a Word that speaks authoritatively about what humans are and what they are for (Casanova 1994; Taylor 2007). Movements that defend the poor, protest humiliation, or resist degrading forms of exploitation often draw on scriptures, liturgy, and communal memories that are explicitly framed as responses to a revelatory address. Yet the dominant theoretical models that govern what counts as a legitimate public justification tend to regard such sources as acceptable only in a private or motivational register. Citizens may be moved by them, but they are expected, at some point, to translate their reasons into a vocabulary that does not rely on any particular revelatory source.

This generates the central puzzle that animates the present article. On the one hand, democratic publics lean heavily on a thick moral vocabulary of human dignity and telos when they ask what may and may not be done to persons in law, policy, and technology. On the other hand, mainstream theories of public reason are designed to keep claims that explicitly invoke a Word with authority over norm and telos at arm's length from the structure of public justification (Rawls 1993, 1997; Habermas 1996; Audi and Wolterstorff 1997). Democracies thus depend on a moral language that, for many of their citizens, is inseparable from Sabda, while their official theories of public reason hesitate to recognise Sabda as anything more than a private source of motivation.

1.1 From pure logic to dignity and telos: the trajectory of The Cohesive Tetrad

The present article is the third step in a larger project that develops The Cohesive Tetrad as a framework for truth governance (Mutaqin 2025a, 2025b). The first step examined the status of pure logic and intra worldly rationality in that governance. It argued that logic, understood as the disciplined management of inference, consistency, and conceptual clarity, is indispensable yet insufficient to play the role of ultimate authority. Logic can test and clarify claims. It can unfold implications that are already latent in premises. It cannot, by itself, generate the norm and telos that tell us what is good, what is forbidden, and what human lives are for.

The second step turned to the terrain of human dignity and telos. It asked what is required if we want to take seriously the strongest claims that contemporary democracies make about human worth. It proposed a set of minimal dignity axioms and argued that, taken together, they cannot be rendered fully coherent by appealing only to human capacities, evolutionary history, or social contracts (Mutaqin 2025b; Waldron 2012; Nussbaum 2006; Sangiovanni 2017). These three candidates illuminate important aspects of moral life, yet they cannot, alone or in combination, bear the full weight of claims about inherent and equal dignity, non

instrumentalisation, the inclusion of the most vulnerable, and long term institutional accountability.

On that basis, the earlier work introduced Sabda, defined as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, as a necessary horizon if minimal dignity axioms are to make sense (Mutaqin 2025a, 2025b). Sabda does not float alone. It is embedded within The Cohesive Tetrad, a configuration of six registers that together form an architecture for truth governance: Sabda, Logic, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment. Sabda sets the horizon of norm and telos. Logic tests coherence and implication. Qualia names the lived experience of individuals and communities under regimes of law, policy, and technology. Mistika is defined as Mistika, the intentional-spiritual dimension of journeying toward direct encounter with the transcendent. Akhlak concerns the observable moral character of persons and institutions. Intention-Trace Alignment is defined as Intention-Trace Alignment, the degree of alignment between epistemic intention and epistemic moral trace across time. The present article takes these definitions and the dignity axioms as background (Mutaqin 2025a, 2025b). It does not attempt to reargue the case. Instead, it asks what follows when this framework is brought into the explicitly political terrain of public reason in plural societies.

1.2 Moving to the political: public reason and deep pluralism

With that background in place, the focus of this third article shifts from the metaphysical and axiological questions of norm and telos to a political question. The question is how claims to truth, especially those grounded in Sabda, should appear in democratic public reasoning under conditions of deep pluralism (Rawls 1993; Habermas 1996; Forst 2012).

Deep pluralism is more than a diversity of preferences or lifestyles. It refers to the coexistence of comprehensive doctrines, worldviews, and epistemic authorities that can neither be reduced to one another nor straightforwardly ranked within a single immanent hierarchy. In such a context, democratic institutions are expected to justify their laws and policies to citizens who disagree, sometimes profoundly, about God, scripture, revelation, and the ultimate structure of reality.

The mainstream answer in political theory has been to develop models of public reason. These models, in their different ways, share a common intuition. Legitimate political justifications for constitutional essentials and fundamental questions of justice should not depend on claims that only adherents of one comprehensive doctrine can reasonably accept. Religious reasons may play a role in civil society and may motivate individual citizens, but at some point in the public justificatory process they must be translated into reasons that do not presuppose any particular authority of Sabda (Rawls 1993, 1997; Habermas 1996; Audi and Wolterstorff 1997). Once we accept the conclusions of the previous articles, however, a question becomes unavoidable. If our strongest claims about human dignity and telos in democratic life require Sabda as horizon, and if Sabda is defined precisely as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, what happens when models of public reason insist that Sabda can at most be a private motivational background, while the final public justification must remain independent of any revelatory source (Larmore 1996; Quong 2011; Mutaqin 2025b)? This article takes that tension as its main object of analysis.

1.3 Thesis and contribution

The main thesis of this article can be stated in direct terms. If we take seriously both our strongest commitments to human dignity and telos and the realities of deep pluralism, then dominant models of public reason that privatise Sabda are structurally unstable. They oscillate between an empty secularism in which the sources of norm and telos are left unnamed and a defensive stance that inadvertently fuels reactive projects of theocratic capture (Taylor 2007; Forst 2012). By integrating Sabda, understood as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, within the multi register architecture of The Cohesive Tetrad, we can articulate a model of democratic truth governance in which Sabda is publicly present under disciplined conditions that protect basic liberties, institutional accountability, and the dignity of dissenters (Mutaqin 2025b; Rawls 1997; Habermas 2006; Forst 2012).

From this thesis follow four specific contributions. First, the article offers a systematic diagnosis of Rawlsian, Habermasian, and liberal neutral models of public reason from the standpoint of the dignity axioms and the role of Sabda developed in earlier work (Rawls 1993, 1997; Habermas 1996; Larmore 1996; Quong 2011). The diagnosis is reconstructive rather than merely external. Second, the article develops the concept of democratic truth governance as a concrete architecture rather than a metaphor, drawing on The Cohesive Tetrad as articulated in previous work (Mutaqin 2025a, 2025b; Forst 2012). Third, the article redefines public reason as a multi register process rather than a single register vocabulary, engaging debates on justification and the public sphere (Forst 2012; Fraser 1990, 2008). Fourth, the article demonstrates the discriminative power of this architecture through stylised cases in bioethics, social policy, and the governance of digital and artificial intelligence systems (Pellegrino 1999; Fineman 2008; O'Neil 2016; Eubanks 2018; Cath 2018; Floridi and Cowls 2019), and in this way prepares the ground for a fourth article that will focus more specifically on law and artificial intelligence.

1.4 Roadmap

The rest of the article proceeds in six steps. Section 2 reconstructs dominant models of public reason and religion in contemporary political theory, focusing on Rawlsian political liberalism, Habermasian discourse theory, and the practical configuration of liberal neutrality and procedural secularism. Section 3 develops a critical assessment of these models using the minimal dignity axioms and introduces the ideal types of empty secularism and fearful theocracy. Section 4 introduces the notion of democratic truth governance and recalls in a focused way the position of Sabda within The Cohesive Tetrad. Section 5 translates this architecture into a new account of public reason as a multi register practice. Section 6 applies the architecture to stylised cases in bioethics, social policy, and artificial intelligence governance. Section 7 concludes by drawing out theoretical and practical implications and situating the argument within the broader series on The Cohesive Tetrad.

2. Dominant models of public reason and religion

This section reconstructs three influential ways of thinking about public reason and religion in contemporary political theory. The aim is not to dismiss them in a polemical way, but to understand what they are trying to protect and why they have become attractive in plural democracies (Rawls 1993; Habermas 1996; Larmore 1996; Quong 2011). Only after this

sympathetic reconstruction will the article subject them to tests posed by the minimal dignity axioms and the role of Sabda.

The three configurations considered here are: Rawlsian public reason in political liberalism, Habermasian discourse theory in a postsecular key, and the looser but powerful pattern of liberal neutrality and procedural secularism that shapes many democratic practices. All three try to preserve freedom and equality under deep pluralism. All three also share a reluctance to allow Sabda, understood as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, to appear as such within the justificatory structure of law and policy.

2.1 Rawlsian public reason: political liberalism and the proviso

John Rawls's political liberalism has been one of the most influential attempts to describe how a democratic society can remain stable and just over time under conditions of reasonable pluralism (Rawls 1993). Rawls starts from the fact that citizens in modern democracies endorse a wide range of comprehensive doctrines. He argues that it would be both unjust and imprudent for the state to base its fundamental principles on the truth of any one such doctrine. In place of that, he proposes a freestanding political conception of justice, articulated in political rather than metaphysical terms.

Within this framework, Rawls introduces the idea of public reason. Public reason is the kind of reasoning appropriate when citizens and officials justify their positions on constitutional essentials and matters of basic justice (Rawls 1993, 1997). In such contexts, citizens have a duty of civility. This duty requires them to offer one another reasons that rest on political values that other reasonable citizens can accept, despite their differences in comprehensive doctrines. Religious reasons are not completely excluded from political discussion, but they are subject to a proviso. Citizens who invoke such reasons must, in due course, also be willing to support the same political positions with public reasons that do not presuppose any comprehensive doctrine (Rawls 1997; Audi and Wolterstorff 1997).

From the perspective of The Cohesive Tetrad, there is much to appreciate in this Rawlsian architecture. It takes seriously the dangers of religious majoritarianism and state endorsement of religious truth claims and seeks to protect minorities from coercion (Larmore 1996; Forst 2012). At the same time, the architecture has a clear implication. Even if citizens may be personally motivated by Sabda, the official justificatory language of law and policy must become independent of Sabda when it addresses the community as a whole. Sabda is, at most, a background motivation, not part of the public structure that explains why certain claims about human dignity and telos have authority over all (Mutaqin 2025b).

2.2 Habermasian discourse theory: postsecular learning and translation

Jürgen Habermas shares Rawls's concern for legitimacy under conditions of pluralism, but his discourse theory develops a different route. For Habermas, the legitimacy of law in a constitutional democracy arises from procedures in which those affected by legal norms can participate as equals in rational deliberation (Habermas 1996). Law functions as a medium that translates communicative power, generated in public debates, into administrative power.

In later writings on postsecular society, Habermas recognises more explicitly that religions remain important sources of moral insight and motivation. He argues that a reflexively secular

society ought not treat religious contributions merely as residues of an earlier stage, but as possible bearers of truth (Habermas 2006, 2008). This has two consequences. First, secular citizens have a duty of openness; they should be willing to listen to religious arguments in their own language and to participate in a cooperative effort of translation. Second, Habermas differentiates between informal public spheres and formal institutions. In civil society, citizens are free to use religious language, including explicit references to scripture and revelation. In parliaments, courts, and administrations, however, the language that counts for the justification of law must be secular (Habermas 1996, 2006).

From the standpoint of The Cohesive Tetrad, this is a significant advance over rigid secularism. Habermas acknowledges the epistemic status of religious traditions and treats them as partners in mutual learning (Casanova 1994; Taylor 2007). Yet the structural role assigned to religious reasons remains limited. Only the secularly translated residue of religious claims can enter the final justification of law. The authority of Sabda as Sabda, that is as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, is not recognised at the point where legal norms are adopted and enforced (Habermas 2006; Forst 2012; Mutaqin 2025b).

2.3 Liberal neutrality and procedural secularism in practice

Alongside these explicit theories, many democracies operate with a more diffuse set of ideas often referred to as liberal neutrality and procedural secularism. Here the emphasis falls less on systematic philosophical accounts and more on institutional arrangements and political culture (Larmore 1996; Quong 2011). The ideal of neutrality holds that the state should not adopt any comprehensive doctrine as its official view of the world. Procedural secularism translates this into concrete practices that separate religious institutions from the state and encourage the use of allegedly general, rational, or scientific reasons in law and policy (Casanova 1994; Taylor 2007).

Over time, however, a drift often occurs. In the absence of a shared articulation of ultimate norm and telos, public reasoning and policy design tend to rely increasingly on technocratic and economic rationality (Forst 2012; Galeotti 2015). Decisions are framed in terms of efficiency, cost effectiveness, and system stability. Human dignity and telos continue to be mentioned, but the operative criteria for choosing between options are provided primarily by models of risk, utility, and system maintenance. The result is a configuration the article later names empty secularism (Taylor 2007; Mutaqin 2025b).

2.4 Preliminary assessment from the horizon of dignity and telos

A fair assessment of these models must begin by acknowledging their accomplishments (Rawls 1993; Habermas 1996; Larmore 1996; Quong 2011). They seek to prevent the fusion of state power with any single religious or anti religious doctrine and to protect minorities and freedom of conscience. Yet when viewed from the horizon of dignity and telos, as clarified in earlier work, a shared limitation becomes visible (Waldron 2012; Nussbaum 2006). All three configurations try to hold together two commitments. On the one hand, they wish to affirm a strong language of human dignity and equal moral worth. On the other hand, they are reluctant to acknowledge Sabda, or any analogous revelatory source, as a public authority in relation to norm and telos.

The minimal dignity axioms developed in previous work sharpen this tension (Mutaqin 2025b; Sangiovanni 2017). If we claim that every human being has inherent dignity not reducible to function, that this dignity is equal, that no one may be reduced to a mere instrument, that the full range of vulnerability is included in the scope of concern, and that institutions must be accountable to their own historical trace, then we owe an account of what humans are and why their worth has that structure. Capacities, evolution, and contracts, taken alone or together, cannot fully answer that demand. Sabda was introduced as the necessary horizon. If this is right, then models of public reason that refuse to let Sabda appear in the justificatory structure of law and policy face a choice. Either they loosen the content of their dignity talk so that it no longer carries the full weight of the axioms, or they tacitly rely on sources of norm and telos that they are unwilling to name (Taylor 2007; Forst 2012; Mutaqin 2025b). This sets the stage for the analysis of empty secularism and fearful theocracy.

3. Two failures: empty secularism and fearful theocracy

The previous section showed that dominant models of public reason attempt to stabilise democracy under deep pluralism by keeping Sabda at a distance from the justificatory structure of law and policy (Taylor 2007; Forst 2012; Casanova 1994). They do so for reasons that are not trivial. Yet once the minimal dignity axioms and the role of Sabda are taken seriously, these models face an internal strain. Under that strain, democratic practices tend to gravitate toward two defective configurations: empty secularism and fearful theocracy.

3.1 Empty secularism: when procedures remain and telos evaporates

Empty secularism is not identical with the principled separation of religious institutions and the state. It is a structural condition in which the horizon of norm and telos that informs public justification is no longer articulated, even though the language of human dignity and rights remains in use (Taylor 2007). The drift toward empty secularism can begin with reasonable commitments to neutrality and accessibility of reasons but gradually erodes the public acknowledgment of any authoritative source of norm and telos, including Sabda (Larmore 1996; Quong 2011; Forst 2012; Galeotti 2015).

When we test this configuration against the minimal dignity axioms, the deficiencies become visible. Axiom 1 and Axiom 2 are compromised when persons are evaluated primarily in terms of productivity, earning potential, or risk profile, undermining inherent and equal dignity (Nussbaum 2006; Waldron 2012; Fineman 2008). Axiom 3 is threatened when persons are treated as variables in optimisation problems, especially under regimes of data driven governance (Meilaender 2009; Jonas 1984). Axiom 4 suffers when those at the edges of life or with expensive needs are systematically disadvantaged (Fineman 2008). Axiom 5 is weakened by short time horizons and procedural self satisfaction that neglect the historical trace of exclusion and humiliation (Jonas 1984; Forst 2012). From the vantage point of The Cohesive Tetrad, empty secularism can be described as a configuration in which Logic and fragments of Qualia are used without being anchored in Sabda, Mistika, Akhlak, or Intention-Trace Alignment (Mutaqin 2025a, 2025b).

3.2 Fearful theocracy: when one interpretation of Sabda freezes the circuit

Fearful theocracy is the mirror image of empty secularism. It arises when communities that have experienced the injuries of hollow normativity respond by attempting to reinstall Sabda at the centre of political power, yet do so in a way that conflates Sabda with one historically contingent interpretation and insulates that interpretation from correction (Casanova 1994; Taylor 2007; MacIntyre 1981). A monopoly over interpretation is asserted, political deliberation is reduced to one way sabda reasoning, dissent is delegitimised, and Sabda is at risk of being instrumentalised for projects of identity and control.

Subjected to the dignity axioms, fearful theocracy fails as well. Axiom 1 and Axiom 2 are violated when dissenters or minorities are treated as less than full participants in public life, even if their formal status as citizens remains intact (Nussbaum 2006; Kittay 1999). Axiom 3 is threatened when lives and bodies are treated as raw material for projects of religious purification or cultural restoration (Fineman 2008; Meilaender 2009). Axiom 4 suffers when the most vulnerable belong to already marginalised groups, whose suffering is rationalised as a necessary cost of maintaining purity or order (Fineman 2008). Axiom 5 is undermined when institutions present themselves as faithful embodiments of Sabda by definition, deflecting criticism of their historical record as an attack on the sacred (Jonas 1984; Forst 2012). Viewed through The Cohesive Tetrad, fearful theocracy is a configuration in which Sabda is asserted without allowing Logic, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment to perform their proper work of testing and refining claims made in its name (Mutaqin 2025a, 2025b; MacIntyre 1981).

3.3 Structural connection and the search for a third configuration

Empty secularism and fearful theocracy can appear as opposites. Yet at the structural level they are connected. Both arise from a misplacement of Sabda within the architecture of truth governance (Taylor 2007; Forst 2012). Empty secularism misplaces Sabda by expelling it from the public structure of justification. Fearful theocracy misplaces Sabda by collapsing it into one interpretation that is placed beyond correction. In both cases, the relationship between Sabda and the other registers of The Cohesive Tetrad is distorted (Galeotti 2015; Sangiovanni 2017).

If the analysis of earlier work is accepted, democracies that wish to uphold strong claims about human dignity and telos cannot remain indefinitely in either configuration (Mutaqin 2025b). They face a trilemma. They can weaken their dignity talk so that it no longer asserts more than their secular foundations can justify. They can slide into or embrace fearful theocracy. Or they can search for a third configuration in which Sabda is publicly acknowledged as horizon of norm and telos, while the full architecture of The Cohesive Tetrad structures the way in which claims to truth, including those grounded in Sabda, move through democratic institutions.

4. Sabda and the architecture of democratic truth governance

The analysis so far has shown that dominant models of public reason either hollow out the public horizon of norm and telos or invite reactive attempts to enthrone one interpretation of Sabda as unchallengeable political authority (Mutaqin 2025b). If the minimal dignity axioms and the earlier arguments for Sabda are taken seriously, neither outcome is acceptable. We

need a configuration in which Sabda can play its normative role without destroying democratic freedom, pluralism, and institutional accountability.

4.1 The position of Sabda within The Cohesive Tetrad

The Cohesive Tetrad is a six register architecture for truth governance. It consists of Sabda, Logic, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment (Mutaqin 2025a, 2025b). Sabda is understood as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos. Logic refers to disciplined practices of inference and consistency checking. Qualia names lived experience under regimes of law, policy, and technology. Mistika is the intentional-spiritual dimension of journeying toward direct encounter with the transcendent. Akhlak concerns observable moral character. Intention-Trace Alignment concerns the degree of alignment between epistemic intention and epistemic moral trace across time.

In this architecture, Sabda occupies the place of horizon setting authority. The other registers do not compete with Sabda at the same level. They act as channels through which claims grounded in Sabda and claims grounded in secular expertise must pass to be considered trustworthy in public life (Mutaqin 2025a, 2025b). Holding Sabda and the other registers together in a disciplined way is essential to resist both empty secularism and fearful theocracy.

4.2 Defining democratic truth governance

Democratic truth governance, as used in this article, does not mean that a government possesses truth in a proprietary sense. It refers instead to the structures and practices through which claims to truth, especially in matters of norm and telos, are brought into democratic institutions, tested, and subjected to correction over time (Forst 2012; Sangiovanni 2017). Four conditions define democratic truth governance in a plural society: openness of sources, protection of dignity and freedom of conscience, mechanisms of internal correction, and integration of multiple registers. These conditions echo and deepen the dignity axioms (Waldron 2012; Nussbaum 2006) and the right to justification in contemporary political theory (Forst 2012).

On this definition, The Cohesive Tetrad is a candidate architecture for democratic truth governance. It does not prescribe a single constitutional form. It specifies normative and epistemic patterns that any democratic arrangement must display if it is to treat dignity and telos with integrity (Mutaqin 2025a, 2025b).

4.3 The normative role of Sabda in democracy

Within this architecture, Sabda plays four normative roles that cannot be fully assumed by other sources. First, Sabda grounds inherent and equal dignity by declaring that every human being is created, addressed, and evaluated in a way that does not depend on capacity, status, or contribution (Waldron 2012; Nussbaum 2006; Sangiovanni 2017). Second, Sabda establishes non instrumentalisation as a binding limit by speaking of humans as bearers of a calling or telos that cannot be subordinated to purely instrumental calculus (Jonas 1984; Meilaender 2009). Third, Sabda integrates the full spectrum of vulnerability into the horizon of concern by addressing the weak and marginal in a way that refuses their exclusion (Kittay 1999; Fineman 2008; Nussbaum 2006). Fourth, Sabda provides a norm for evaluating the historical trace of institutions by naming forms of oppression and calling for repentance (Jonas 1984; Forst 2012).

None of these roles can be adequately filled by appeals to capacities, evolution, or mutually advantageous contracts alone. Those appeals may contribute partial insights. They do not suffice to stabilise strong dignity claims that democracies make in their constitutions and court decisions. Sabda is required if such claims are to be more than inherited rhetoric (Mutaqin 2025b).

4.4 The epistemic priority of Sabda over logic and data

Acknowledging the normative role of Sabda in democracy raises a delicate question. In what sense can we speak of the priority of Sabda over logic and data without denying the legitimacy of rational inquiry and empirical evidence. The article answers by distinguishing levels of authority. Sabda has priority at the level of norm and telos, setting boundaries and directions within which logic and data operate (Mutaqin 2025b; Jonas 1984). Logic and data have instrumental authority, not final authority, in matters of norm and telos (Forst 2012; Floridi and Cowls 2019). When a conflict arises between what appears to be technically optimal and what Sabda declares incompatible with human dignity, Sabda has preemptive priority (Jonas 1984; MacIntyre 1981). This pattern resists empty secularism by refusing to allow logic and data to become silent sources of norm and telos, and resists fearful theocracy by insisting that claims about what Sabda requires must constantly be checked in the light of logic and empirical knowledge.

4.5 Integrating Sabda into democratic processes through the Tetrad

With these distinctions in view, we can describe in more concrete terms how Sabda and the other registers of The Cohesive Tetrad can structure democratic decision making. The article presents a schematic sequence: formulation of public claims, logical and conceptual testing, confrontation with lived experience, examination of intentional orientation, evaluation of moral character and institutional patterns, and long term audit of intention and trace (Rawls 1993; Habermas 1996; Forst 2012; Kittay 1999; Fineman 2008; MacIntyre 1981; Nussbaum 2006; Jonas 1984; Mutaqin 2025b). In this sequence, Sabda is integrated into democratic processes neither as a private optional background nor as a trump card that ends discussion. It functions as the horizon of norm and telos within a multi register architecture that demands logical clarity, attentiveness to experience, examination of intention, cultivation of Akhlak, and long term accountability.

5. The Cohesive Tetrad as an architecture of public reason

If democratic truth governance names the way claims to norm and telos should move through institutions, public reason names the way citizens and officials ought to speak to one another when they justify coercive laws. The previous sections argued that dominant models of public reason are structurally unstable once the dignity axioms and the need for Sabda as horizon are taken seriously (Rawls 1993, 1997; Habermas 1996; Taylor 2007; Forst 2012; Galeotti 2015). This section proposes an alternative. It develops The Cohesive Tetrad not only as a framework for truth governance but as an architecture of public reason suited to plural democracies.

5.1 From one register to multi register public reason

One register ideals of public reason emerged as a response to genuine dangers: the risk that citizens justify laws by invoking the truth of their own comprehensive doctrines, placing others in a position of permanent inferiority (Rawls 1993, 1997; Habermas 1996). These models ask citizens to offer public reasons couched in a vocabulary that does not presuppose acceptance of any particular view about God, revelation, or metaphysics, often framed as political values or constitutional principles (Audi and Wolterstorff 1997; Larmore 1996; Quong 2011). Yet, once the strength of dignity language in constitutional practice is recognised, one register models either thin out the shared vocabulary so that it no longer carries strong claims, or they rely implicitly on unacknowledged sources of norm and telos. In practice, this often yields the empty secularism described earlier (Taylor 2007; Forst 2012; Galeotti 2015).

The alternative proposed here is to treat public reason as a multi register practice structured by The Cohesive Tetrad. Public reason is defined as the practice by which citizens and institutions in a democracy bring claims about coercive laws and policies under the joint discipline of Sabda, Logic, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment, in order to arrive at decisions that can be justified to all as consistent with human dignity and telos amid deep disagreement (Mutaqin 2025b; Forst 2012; Fraser 1990, 2008). Sabda based arguments are not required to disappear from public speech (Casanova 1994; Taylor 2007). Secular moral arguments and scientific insights are not demoted (Forst 2012; Sangiovanni 2017). Accessibility is achieved at the level of process rather than linguistic homogeneity (Fraser 1990, 2008; Galeotti 2015).

5.2 Normative conditions for the public presence of Sabda

If Sabda is to be publicly acknowledged as horizon of norm and telos, certain conditions must be in place to prevent collapse into fearful theocracy. The article articulates four such conditions: universality of address, non coercion of conscience, accountable interpretation, and protection of dissent. Universality of address requires that Sabda, as invoked in the public sphere, be understood as speaking about the dignity and telos of all humans, not only adherents of a particular community (Nussbaum 2006; Waldron 2012; Sangiovanni 2017). Non coercion of conscience reinforces the liberal insight that the state may not compel belief, even when norms are justified by reference to Sabda (Audi and Wolterstorff 1997; Forst 2012). Accountable interpretation insists that claims about what Sabda requires be open to scrutiny by Logic, Qualia, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment (Forst 2012; MacIntyre 1981; Mutaqin 2025b). Protection of dissent safeguards the status of dissenting citizens and internal critics as full bearers of dignity, and recognises dissent as a carrier of Qualia and a trigger for alignment audits (Fraser 1990, 2008; Galeotti 2015).

5.3 Institutional roles of the six registers

If The Cohesive Tetrad is to function as an architecture of public reason, its registers must find concrete expression in institutions. In legislatures, this implies that Sabda informed arguments may appear explicitly, that logical scrutiny of justifications becomes a recognised part of practice, that structured attention to Qualia is institutionalised, and that legislatures commit themselves to periodic evaluation of the long term effects of laws, especially on vulnerable groups (Casanova 1994; Taylor 2007; Rawls 1993; Forst 2012; Kittay 1999; Fineman 2008;

Jonas 1984; Mutaqin 2025b). In courts, it means that the horizon of Sabda and dignity that shaped constitutional commitments is acknowledged without turning judges into theologians, that logical and doctrinal consistency is central, that experiential input from litigants and amici curiae is taken seriously, and that courts remain willing to revisit precedents whose historical trace has become unjust (Habermas 1996; Waldron 2012; Nussbaum 2006; Kittay 1999; Fineman 2008; MacIntyre 1981; Jonas 1984; Mutaqin 2025b).

In executive agencies and bureaucratic practice, The Cohesive Tetrad informs both policy design and implementation. Sabda and the dignity axioms shape the horizon, while logic and data are used to understand causal relations and anticipate unintended effects, and Qualia is accessed through participatory processes (Nussbaum 2006; Fineman 2008; Forst 2012). Implementation is shaped by Mistika in the sense of accountability to a transcendent horizon, by Akhlak in organisational cultures, and by Intention-Trace Alignment through monitoring and evaluation systems that track lived consequences, not only quantitative outputs (MacIntyre 1981; Jonas 1984).

Finally, in ethics bodies and regulators concerned with biotechnology and artificial intelligence, The Cohesive Tetrad provides a template for evaluating powerful new systems. Sabda raises prior questions about practices that may be inherently incompatible with dignity and telos, even if efficient (Jonas 1984; O'Neil 2016; Eubanks 2018). Logic and data are employed to scrutinise technical properties and claims about safety (Cath 2018; Floridi and Cowls 2019). Qualia ensures that regulatory decisions are informed by the experiences of those most affected (Eubanks 2018; Fineman 2008). Mistika and Akhlak address the moral formation of designers, deployers, and regulators (MacIntyre 1981; Nussbaum 2006). Intention-Trace Alignment mandates ongoing audits of AI deployments (O'Neil 2016; Jonas 1984; Mutaqin 2025b).

6. Stylised cases: applying the architecture

The architecture proposed so far remains at a relatively high level of abstraction. To test its coherence and discriminative power, it must be brought into contact with situations that resemble the kinds of conflicts democracies actually face. The article therefore considers three stylised cases in bioethics, social policy, and digital governance.

6.1 Bioethics: fragile life at the threshold of death

The first case concerns the regulation of withdrawing life sustaining treatment from patients who are irreversibly unconscious, with no reasonable prospect of recovery and ambiguous prior wishes. Under empty secularism, the formal language of legislation and policy is secular and ostensibly neutral, and ethics committees frame the problem in terms of cost effectiveness and quality adjusted life years (Pellegrino 1999; Nussbaum 2006). Dignity is mentioned but functionally defined through proxies such as consciousness and capacity for preference. Those who cannot speak for themselves risk being treated primarily as cost centres.

Under fearful theocracy, by contrast, an authorised reading of Sabda declares any withdrawal of life sustaining treatment impermissible. Law mandates continuation of all interventions until biological death, regardless of context, and families or clinicians who question this are reprimanded as lacking faith (Meilaender 2009; Jonas 1984). Sabda is invoked constantly, but

Logic, Qualia, and Akhlak are muted. Patients and families risk becoming instruments in a project of defending an interpretation.

Under democratic truth governance shaped by The Cohesive Tetrad, Sabda speaks publicly about the worth of each human life and declares such lives non disposable, yet interpretations of Sabda are subjected to logical analysis and experiential testing (Pellegrino 1999; Sulmasy 2002; Meilaender 2009; Kittay 1999; Fineman 2008; Mutaqin 2025b). Logic distinguishes between killing and allowing to die, between proportionate and disproportionate interventions. Qualia is accessed through structured encounters with families and clinicians. Mistika and Akhlak examine motives and institutional cultures. Intention-Trace Alignment commits the polity to revisiting regulations in light of their historical effects. The resulting law may prohibit active ending of life, affirm a strong presumption in favour of basic care, and permit withdrawal of futile interventions under clear criteria. It honours dignity axioms more faithfully than the alternatives.

6.2 Social policy: costly lives and the welfare of disabled citizens

The second case concerns long term support for citizens with profound disabilities who require extensive assistance and are unlikely to enter the labour market. Under empty secularism, debates are framed largely in terms of fiscal sustainability and incentives. Disabled citizens are acknowledged as bearers of rights, but the operative logic weighs the financial cost of comprehensive support against aggregate welfare gains (Nussbaum 2006; Fineman 2008). Those whose needs are most expensive and who contribute least to measured productivity are placed under suspicion.

Under fearful theocracy, disabled citizens may be described as bearers of special blessings or tests of the community's faith, yet concrete structures of state support remain thin. Families are exhorted to accept their burdens as divine vocation, while requests for more assistance risk being stigmatised (Kittay 1999; Meilaender 2009). Sabda is used to confer meaning on suffering, but Logic, Qualia, and Akhlak are not adequately engaged. Structural injustice is spiritualised.

Under democratic truth governance, Sabda shapes the horizon by speaking of the equal worth of those who are weak and of obligations to care for those who cannot care for themselves (Nussbaum 2006; Kittay 1999). Logic examines how different designs distribute burdens and opportunities, drawing on egalitarian theory (Anderson 1999; Fraser 1990, 2008). Qualia is brought into the centre through participatory processes that involve disabled citizens and their families as co designers of support systems (Kittay 1999; Fineman 2008). Mistika and Akhlak ask what public authorities are really seeking in these debates and expose temptations to preserve comfort while retaining moral self images (MacIntyre 1981). Intention-Trace Alignment requires that programmes be reviewed over time for unintended patterns of dependency or exclusion (Jonas 1984; Mutaqin 2025b). The result is a social policy that commits serious resources to ensuring that even citizens with profound disabilities can live in ways that express their telos as human beings.

6.3 Digital infrastructures and AI: scoring, sorting, and governing by data

The third case concerns the adoption of artificial intelligence systems for social governance, such as algorithmic scoring systems to allocate welfare benefits, predict crime risk, or prioritise

access to public services. Under empty secularism, arguments for such systems focus on efficiency, accuracy, and the reduction of human bias (O'Neil 2016; Eubanks 2018). Human dignity is invoked as a reason to eliminate explicit discrimination, but deeper questions about whether certain forms of automated classification are compatible with treating citizens as bearers of telos are rarely asked. People who occupy marginal positions become subjects of intensified surveillance and control, mapped through data traces they did not consent to produce.

Under fearful theocracy, Sabda is invoked to justify digital systems for moral surveillance and enforcement. Authorities may present scoring systems as tools for identifying those who deviate from prescribed behavioural norms, including religious ones, and integrate participation in worship and conformity to religious codes into composite scores (Jonas 1984; Taylor 2007). The distinction between divine judgement and human monitoring is blurred, and logical or empirical questions about system harms are dismissed.

Within a Tetrad based architecture, debates about AI for social governance take a different shape. Sabda raises prior questions about domains where algorithmic scoring is inherently incompatible with human dignity and telos and must be ruled out in advance (Jonas 1984; Forst 2012). Logic and data are fully engaged but treated as instruments, not final authorities (Cath 2018; Floridi and Cowls 2019). Qualia is foregrounded through participatory assessments of communities likely to be targeted, whose experiences with earlier waves of data driven governance are analysed as evidence (Eubanks 2018; Fineman 2008). Mistika and Akhlak address the moral formation of designers and regulators, focusing on temptations to outsource responsibility to machines (MacIntyre 1981; Nussbaum 2006). Intention-Trace Alignment mandates ongoing audits of deployments, with willingness to curtail or redesign systems whose historical trace reveals new patterns of discrimination or exclusion (O'Neil 2016; Jonas 1984; Mutaqin 2025b).

6.4 Lessons from the cases

Taken together, these stylised cases show that The Cohesive Tetrad does more than offer a vocabulary for criticising empty secularism and fearful theocracy. It provides a structured way of reasoning that preserves genuine achievements of secular public reason, retains the normative depth supplied by Sabda, and equips democratic institutions to test and correct both secular and religious claims by bringing them under the joint discipline of Logic, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment (Mutaqin 2025b; Forst 2012; Nussbaum 2006; O'Neil 2016; Eubanks 2018).

7. Implications and conclusion

This article asked how Sabda, defined as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, can be integrated into democratic public reason under conditions of deep pluralism. It argued that dominant models of public reason, while motivated by legitimate concerns, are structurally unstable once we take seriously both strong claims about human dignity and the role of Sabda in grounding those claims (Mutaqin 2025a, 2025b; Rawls 1993, 1997; Habermas 1996; Larmore 1996; Quong 2011). It proposed The Cohesive Tetrad as an architecture for democratic truth governance and public reason and tested that architecture through stylised cases in bioethics, social policy, and AI governance.

Theoretically, the proposal challenges the assumption that respect for pluralism necessarily requires the privatisation of Sabda (Taylor 2007; Casanova 1994; Mutaqin 2025b). If the dignity axioms are correct, then attempts to sustain strong dignity claims while excluding Sabda from public justification are unstable. It reframes public reason as a process rather than a single language, suggesting that accessibility and reciprocity are secured by exposing reasons to shared registers of scrutiny rather than by forcing them into an allegedly neutral idiom (Forst 2012; Fraser 1990, 2008). It clarifies that the dangers of political religion are not intrinsic to the public presence of Sabda but to particular ways of misplacing Sabda in the architecture of truth governance (Jonas 1984; MacIntyre 1981; Galeotti 2015).

Practically, the Tetrad architecture invites re examination of institutional design. Legislatures might revise procedures to give more structured place to experiential testimony from vulnerable groups, to long term audits of legislative consequences, and to explicit reflection on the moral character of implementing institutions (Waldron 2012; Nussbaum 2006; Fineman 2008; Forst 2012). Courts might deepen engagement with historical sources that shaped constitutional commitments to dignity, while remaining cautious about presenting themselves as arbiters of theological truth. Executive agencies might integrate participatory processes and character formation into civil service training. Ethics bodies and regulators in biotechnology and artificial intelligence might adopt evaluation frameworks that explicitly track all six registers and refuse to treat technical success or efficiency as sufficient justification (O'Neil 2016; Eubanks 2018; Cath 2018; Floridi and Cowls 2019). At the level of research, further work could develop case studies, explore how different religious traditions articulate Sabda like notions, and elaborate indicators for assessing Intention-Trace Alignment in complex institutional settings (Forst 2012; Sangiovanni 2017; Mutaqin 2025b).

Within the larger sequence of work on The Cohesive Tetrad, this article occupies an intermediate position. The first article argued that pure logic cannot be the ultimate authority in truth governance. The second argued that strong claims about human dignity and telos require Sabda, embedded within The Cohesive Tetrad, if they are to make sense (Mutaqin 2025a, 2025b). The present article has extended this argument into the domain of democracy and public reason, showing how Sabda and the Tetrad can underpin an architecture of democratic truth governance that avoids both empty secularism and fearful theocracy. The next article in the series will apply this architecture more tightly to the domain of law and artificial intelligence, asking how legal systems and AI infrastructures can be designed, interpreted, and governed so that they become instruments of a truth governance that honours human dignity and telos under Sabda, rather than engines of new forms of domination or hollow proceduralism (O'Neil 2016; Cath 2018; Floridi and Cowls 2019).

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Sabda, Logic, and Truth Governance: The Cohesive Tetrad for Law and Artificial Intelligence

Abstrak

This article addresses a structural tension at the heart of contemporary truth governance. Modern institutions of science, law, and artificial intelligence often rely on an implicit architecture of pure logic that combines scientism, hard evidentialism, a strict fact value divide, and strong naturalism about human telos and dignity. Drawing on the canonical formulation of The Cohesive Tetrad, the article develops an alternative architecture in which Sabda (Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos), logic, Qualia, Mistika as the intentional spiritual dimension of journeying toward direct encounter with the transcendent, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment are treated as distinct yet interdependent domains of truth. Methodologically, the study adopts a normative conceptual design grounded in minimal human dignity axioms, reconstructs the architecture of pure logic, and then tests both architectures against these axioms. The analysis is applied to two critical arenas, namely legal rationality and the governance of artificial intelligence, in order to compare how each architecture organises purpose, constraint, and long term moral trace. The article argues that law and AI built solely on pure logic are structurally prone to procedural absolutism, epistemic injustice, legitimation vacuums, and algorithmic intensification of existing harms, whereas law and AI situated within The Cohesive Tetrad can re anchor norm and telos in Sabda, integrate experiential and spiritual dimensions of truth, and enforce accountability through observable configurations of Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment over time.

Keywords: *truth governance; Sabda; logic; human dignity; legal rationality; artificial intelligence governance; Qualia; Mistika; Akhlak; Intention-Trace Alignment; The Cohesive Tetrad.*

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1. Introduction

Debates about truth, evidence, and legitimacy have moved from seminar rooms into the centre of institutional life. Courts rely on expert witnesses and probabilistic tools, governments appeal to data driven policy, and platforms deploy machine learning models to filter information and steer behaviour. At first sight, this landscape appears to vindicate an old promise of rational modernity. If institutions are guided by logic, supported by evidence, and insulated from arbitrary passion, then truth governance should become more reliable and more just. Yet public distrust, epistemic polarisation, and recurrent crises in law and artificial intelligence suggest that something deeper is amiss.

A growing body of philosophical and empirical work has begun to question the sufficiency of an implicit architecture of pure logic that underwrites many of these developments. This architecture combines scientism, hard evidentialism, a strict separation between fact and value, and a strong naturalism concerning human telos and dignity (Putnam, 2002; Haack, 2003; MacIntyre, 1988). It treats rationality primarily as formal coherence and evidential support, while moral and spiritual sources of normativity are relegated to the private sphere or translated into soft preferences. In practice, however, law and artificial intelligence continue to invoke thick notions of dignity, justice, and responsibility that cannot be fully explained or justified within this architecture. The same institutions that speak the language of neutrality and optimisation must also promise to respect persons, protect the vulnerable, and answer for their long term moral trace.

This tension has become particularly visible in two arenas. In law, theories of legal rationality have sought to secure legitimacy through coherent rules, principled interpretation, and fair procedures (Fuller, 1964; Dworkin, 1986; Habermas, 1996). Yet experiences of procedural injustice, epistemic exclusion, and selective enforcement reveal that formal rationality alone is not enough to safeguard dignity and trust (Fricker, 2007). In artificial intelligence, ethical frameworks and policy guidelines insist on fairness, accountability, and respect for human rights (Jobin et al., 2019; Floridi and Cowls, 2019; OECD, 2019; UNESCO, 2021). At the same time, algorithmic systems amplify historical bias, manipulate attention, and reduce persons to data points in optimisation functions (O'Neil, 2016; Mittelstadt et al., 2016). The language of pure logic appears powerful, but its institutional embodiments repeatedly fall short of the moral expectations they themselves invoke.

The Cohesive Tetrad is proposed as a response to this structural deficit. Developed in previous philosophical and preprint work (Mutaqin, 2025a; Mutaqin, 2025b), The Cohesive Tetrad articulates four interlocking domains of truth and practice. Sabda is defined as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos. Logic organises reasons and tests coherence. Qualia concerns the experiential dimension of truth as it is lived and suffered by persons and communities. Mistika is defined as Mistika, the intentional spiritual dimension of journeying toward direct encounter with the transcendent. These four domains are examined through Akhlak as observable moral character and through Intention-Trace Alignment as the degree of alignment between epistemic intention and epistemic moral trace over time. Instead of allowing one domain to dominate the others, The Cohesive Tetrad proposes an architecture in which each has a distinct role and none can legitimately claim absolute sovereignty.

The present article does not merely describe The Cohesive Tetrad as a set of ideas. It treats it as an architecture of truth governance and brings it into direct confrontation with the architecture of pure logic that currently shapes law and artificial intelligence. The central claim is not that logic should be rejected, but that logic cannot bear the burden of grounding telos and dignity on its own. Logic must be repositioned as a disciplined medium inside an architecture led by Sabda, informed by Qualia, purified by Mistika, and audited through Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment. Only under such an architecture can institutions credibly claim to respect inviolable human dignity while using complex forms of reasoning and technology.

Methodologically, the article adopts a normative conceptual design. First, it reconstructs from the literature the implicit architecture of pure logic that informs much of contemporary thinking about law and artificial intelligence, and formulates a set of minimal human dignity axioms that any plausible architecture of truth governance must satisfy. Second, it reconstructs The Cohesive Tetrad as an explicit architecture by defining its core domains, clarifying their relations, and specifying the role of Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment as long term diagnostics. Third, it tests both architectures against the dignity axioms and applies them to two critical arenas, namely legal rationality and the governance of artificial intelligence. The question is not whether Sabda or logic is more important in the abstract, but how different architectures of their relationship shape the purposes, constraints, and moral traces of concrete institutions.

The contribution of the article is threefold. Conceptually, it offers a structured way to think about truth governance that neither collapses normativity into private belief nor reduces it to procedural regularity. It shows that many existing critiques of scientism, proceduralism, and algorithmic harm can be consolidated into a diagnosis of architectural failure. Normatively, it argues that The Cohesive Tetrad provides a more coherent and humanly adequate architecture for organising Sabda, logic, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment under minimal human dignity axioms. Applied to law and artificial intelligence, it demonstrates how this architecture leads to different design choices regarding legal procedures, evidential standards, algorithmic objectives, and accountability mechanisms. In doing so, the article invites further work on how Sabda and logic can be integrated in the governance of institutions that increasingly shape the conditions under which truth, justice, and humanity are lived.

2. The Ideology of Pure Logic

The argument of this article requires that the opponent be described with as much fairness as possible. If the ideology of pure logic is only a caricature, then defeating it would mean very little. This section therefore reconstructs pure logic as a recognisable and historically plausible constellation of claims about science, reason, and human dignity. Only after that reconstruction can the later critique be taken seriously.

2.1. The aspiration to purity

At the heart of pure logic lies an aspiration that is, in itself, noble. Human beings have seen too many examples of cruelty justified by arbitrary authority, inherited custom, or unexamined passion. In response, modern thought has searched for forms of reasoning that can liberate us from caprice. The dream is simple and powerful: if we can anchor our beliefs and institutions in logic and evidence, then we can free them from superstition, prejudice, and naked power.

This aspiration takes shape in several familiar images. Science is imagined as a project that brackets personal bias, controls subjective interference, and allows nature to speak through data. Law is imagined as a system in which decisions follow from rules and facts, rather than from the mood or social position of the judge. Public reason is imagined as a forum where only arguments that all rational agents could in principle accept are allowed to carry weight. In each of these images, logic functions as a purifier. It is asked to burn away everything that smells of particularity, emotion, tradition, or revelation.

The ideology of pure logic begins when this aspiration hardens into a doctrine. What started as a call for intellectual discipline slowly becomes a picture of the world in which only one kind of voice is allowed to decide what counts as rational and legitimate. That picture can be articulated through four interrelated components: scientism, hard evidentialism, strict separation between facts and values, and strong naturalism about telos and dignity.

2.2. Four components of pure logic

2.2.1. Scientism

Scientism is not the same as respect for science. It is the belief that the methods and styles of reasoning used in the natural sciences exhaust, or nearly exhaust, what counts as serious knowledge. On this view, if something cannot be investigated using the tools of controlled observation, measurement, and generalisation, then it cannot be known in any robust sense. At best it may be a matter of taste, tradition, or private conviction.

Scientism has understandable roots. The successes of physics, chemistry, and biology are undeniable. Technologies built on these sciences have reshaped human life. It is therefore tempting to treat their methods as the gold standard for all inquiry. The danger begins when this temptation turns into exclusion. Fields that deal with meaning, normativity, or transcendence are told that they must either imitate the surface features of the natural sciences or accept marginal status.

Within the ideology of pure logic, scientism acts as a gatekeeper. It filters out any appeal to Sabda as Revelatory Word, since Sabda does not arrive as an experimentally measurable object among others. It filters out much of Qualia and Mistika as well, since lived experience and intentional orientation toward the transcendent do not look like laboratory data. What remains inside the gate are propositions that can be spoken in a style that resembles the natural sciences.

2.2.2. Hard evidentialism

Hard evidentialism states that a belief is only rationally acceptable if it is proportioned to a body of evidence that could in principle be made explicit and publicly shared. Doubt is the default; trust must be earned. At first glance, this can seem like a simple call to intellectual honesty. We should not believe more strongly than our evidence warrants.

In its stricter forms, however, evidentialism begins to distrust any kind of properly basic trust that is not itself grounded in further arguments. It treats faith as irrational by definition. It also becomes suspicious of moral convictions that are not easily converted into evidential claims. Over time, this produces a picture of rationality in which human agents are expected to live

almost entirely in the posture of suspended judgement, except where arguments and data have already spoken.

Within the ideology of pure logic, hard evidentialism supports the idea that Sabda cannot be a source of knowledge. If Sabda is to be considered at all, it must first pass through logical and empirical filters that stand above it as judges. The authority of revelation is therefore inverted. Instead of Sabda judging our use of logic and evidence, logic and evidence are treated as judges over Sabda.

2.2.3. Strict separation between facts and values

The third component is the insistence on a sharp line between facts and values. Facts are taken to describe how the world is. Values express how someone would like the world to be. In the classical form of this distinction, logic and science are thought to occupy the factual side, while morality, religion, and aesthetics are relegated to the realm of subjective or intersubjective preference.

Once again, the initial purpose is understandable. Confusing factual description with moral approval has often led to serious harm. However, the strict separation has side effects. It encourages the thought that truth belongs to the factual side alone, while normativity is left to negotiate for influence without the right to claim truth.

Within the ideology of pure logic, this separation drives a wedge inside human discourse. Statements that belong to Sabda, such as commands, promises, and covenantal claims, are pushed to the value side and stripped of cognitive dignity. Claims about human dignity become difficult to formulate as truths. They begin to look like emphatic preferences: strong feelings backed by social consensus, but not anchored in the structure of reality.

2.2.4. Strong naturalism about telos and dignity

The final component is a strong form of naturalism which holds that all legitimate talk about telos and dignity must eventually be cashed out in natural terms, such as evolutionary fitness, social stability, or psychological well being. On this view, there is no transcendent order of purposes that precedes human choice. Telos is something we project onto the world, not something we receive. Dignity is a useful construct for regulating behaviour, not a reflection of any deeper order.

This naturalism levels the field. Human beings may be more complex than other animals, but they are not different in kind. Whatever special status we grant them must be justified entirely by reference to contingent features of the natural or social world. Once those features change, the status can in principle be renegotiated.

Within the ideology of pure logic, strong naturalism ensures that any claim to a higher telos must be translated into descriptive language. Sabda is not allowed to speak directly about purpose. At most, it becomes an object of study in psychology, sociology, or intellectual history. The authoritative source of norm and telos is now understood to be human preference, aggregated through some rational procedure, or the impersonal process of evolution and adaptation.

2.3. From philosophy to institutional common sense

The four components just described do not usually appear in isolation. They travel together and, over time, become embedded in institutional practices. At that point, the ideology of pure logic no longer needs to be argued explicitly. It solidifies as common sense.

In universities, this appears in the way disciplines are ranked. Fields that resemble the natural sciences are given higher prestige and more resources. Disciplines that work with Sabda, meaning, and normativity are tolerated, sometimes respected for cultural reasons, but quietly treated as less central to the serious business of knowledge. Within such a climate, scholars who wish to be taken seriously often feel pressure to recode their questions in purely logical or empirical terms.

In law, the same ideology appears in the tendency to reduce legal rationality to procedural correctness and evidential sufficiency. The system asks: were the correct rules applied, was the right kind of evidence presented, were the proper steps followed. These questions are crucial, but when they dominate without remainder, the deeper question of whether the legal outcome honours human dignity is pushed to the side or assumed without real scrutiny.

In technology and AI, the ideology appears in the hope that enough data and sophisticated models can replace the need for thick moral judgement. Risk scores, recommendation systems, and predictive policing tools are built on the assumption that if an algorithm is logical, empirically well calibrated, and free from certain technical biases, then its outputs are safe to trust. Questions about whether certain decisions should be automated at all are often left unasked.

In each domain, the same pattern recurs. Logic, understood in a narrow sense as formal and empirical discipline, is given a role that subtly expands from tool to ruler. It decides not only how we should reason about the world, but also which kinds of reasons are allowed to count as public and binding.

2.4. The attractions and strengths of pure logic

It would be a mistake to describe pure logic only in terms of its dangers. The ideology has attractions that are not superficial. If we ignore these, we will underestimate its grip.

First, pure logic promises protection against arbitrariness. When legal or political decisions are justified in terms of shared procedures and publicly accessible evidence, citizens are less vulnerable to the private whims of leaders. Logic seems to offer a shield against tyranny.

Second, pure logic creates a powerful image of unity. If all rational agents are bound by the same norms of inference and by the same body of empirical facts, then in principle the space for deep disagreement can be narrowed. This is especially attractive in plural societies, where appeals to Sabda and tradition are feared as sources of conflict.

Third, pure logic appears to be inclusive. Anyone can in principle learn the rules of inference and the methods of empirical investigation. No one needs to belong to a particular community of faith or to share a thick cultural heritage in order to participate in rational discourse.

These strengths are real. The critique developed in this article does not deny them. It will instead argue that the very goods which pure logic wishes to protect cannot finally be sustained within its own ideological boundaries. Once logic claims sovereignty over all domains of truth, the shield begins to crack. The unity it promises becomes fragile. The inclusiveness it seeks to secure turns out to be incomplete, because it forces many citizens to split their deepest convictions from their public reasoning.

2.5. Summary

The ideology of pure logic can therefore be summarised as follows. It is an ensemble of commitments that elevate a particular style of rationality, born from the legitimate successes of science, into a universal standard. Scientism narrows the field of serious knowledge to what looks like the natural sciences. Hard evidentialism distrusts any properly basic trust that is not grounded in explicit arguments and evidence. The strict separation of facts and values strips moral and revelatory claims of cognitive dignity. Strong naturalism about telos and dignity disallows any appeal to a transcendent source of norm.

Once these commitments are institutionalised, Sabda is either privatised, studied as a psychological or historical object, or functionally silenced. Qualia is compressed into metrics and indicators. Mistika is confined to the interior life with no recognised role in public reasoning. Logic, in its narrow form, is crowned as the only fully legitimate language of truth.

The next section will argue that this crown is too heavy for logic to bear. By examining the inner tensions of scientism, evidentialism, fact value separation, and naturalism, we will see that pure logic cannot finally support the very claims it wishes to defend. This will open the space in which The Cohesive Tetrad can be introduced, not as a rejection of logic, but as an architecture in which logic finds its rightful dignity under the horizon of Sabda, Qualia, and Mistika.

3. An Internal Critique of Pure Logic

The ideology of pure logic presents itself as a friend of clarity. It claims to remove confusion by insisting that only what can be logically argued and empirically supported deserves the name of knowledge. In this section, I do not oppose that ambition from outside. Instead, I ask what happens when pure logic turns its tools upon itself. Can it justify its own norms of inference, its own demands for evidence, its separation of facts and values, and its naturalism about telos and dignity, without secretly relying on what it claims to exclude?

The answer, I will argue, is no. When examined patiently, each pillar of pure logic turns out to lean on forms of trust, normativity, and depth that it cannot generate from within its own picture of the world. The critique is internal in spirit. It is logic that exposes the overreach of logic.

3.1. The problem of self grounding

Any system that demands reasons must eventually face a simple but unforgiving question. What justifies the very norms of reasoning that the system presupposes? If every belief must be supported by a further argument, and every argument must rest on prior norms of inference,

then the chain either continues forever, collapses into circularity, or stops at something that is not itself grounded by another argument.

Pure logic tries to live by the first two options. It treats circularity as a vice and infinite regress as a problem, yet it continues to speak as if its own norms of inference are self evidently binding on any rational agent. When asked why the law of non contradiction, or the demand for consistent probability assignments, or the rules of empirical confirmation should be obeyed, the answer usually shifts into a different register. Either one is told that to deny such norms is "irrational by definition", or that abandoning them would make coherent practice impossible. In both cases, the system has stopped at a commitment that is not itself justified by a further argument. This structure mirrors long standing debates in epistemology about regress, foundationalism, and the limits of pure coherentism, where even the most rigorous accounts concede that some commitments must be received rather than derived (Haack, 2003; Putnam, 2002).

None of this is peculiar to logic. Every practice, including the practice of receiving Sabda, lives from some starting points that are not deduced from prior premises. The problem for pure logic arises only when it denies this fact. It presents itself as a view from nowhere, a practice that can, in principle, give reasons for everything it accepts. Yet its own life depends on a bedrock of trust in certain patterns of inference, in certain forms of experience, and in the very capacity of human minds to track truth. When logic refuses to acknowledge this dependence, it obscures its kinship with other forms of committed reception.

3.2. The limits of hard evidentialism

Hard evidentialism insists that rational belief must proportion itself strictly to publicly shareable evidence. In its more moderate forms, this principle is a healthy discipline against wishful thinking. In its stricter formulations, however, it begins to unravel under its own weight.

Consider simple cases. A scientist believes that her instruments are generally reliable, that the reported results of reputable colleagues are not wholesale fabrications, that the journal she reads did not randomly swap figures between manuscripts. These beliefs are not supported, in every case, by independent investigations. They are sustained by a network of trust, professional norms, and accumulated experience. If she were required to produce explicit evidence for every node in this network before treating any of it as rationally admissible, she would never be able to begin.

The same applies to ordinary life. Most people trust their memories often enough to act, without reconstructing a chain of arguments each morning to prove that they really did lock the door yesterday. They trust the testimony of others, within reason, without demanding a full chain of evidence every time a simple fact is communicated. They trust that the meanings of words will not spontaneously invert from one day to the next. Empirical work on motivated reasoning and questionable research practices confirms that agents do not simply proportion every belief to formally available evidence, but negotiate it through a mixture of trust, virtue, and vulnerability (Kunda, 1990; John et al., 2012).

Hard evidentialism, pushed to its own limit, cannot justify these trusts without self defeat. If it demands explicit evidence for every belief, including the belief that evidence is a reliable guide,

then it collapses into scepticism. If it exempts some beliefs from that demand because they are "practically necessary", then it has already acknowledged that not all rational commitment is grounded in the same way.

What actually happens in scientific and everyday reasoning is more subtle. Certain forms of trust function as starting points. They are not blind leaps, but enduring orientations that can be refined and corrected over time. They resemble, in miniature and in a limited way, the structure of Sabda. They are not deduced from evidence. They are received and then tested in practice.

Pure logic depends heavily on such trusts, yet its official story has trouble admitting this. It prefers to speak as if everything stands or falls with explicit argument and evidence, even though its own existence as a practice already presupposes more than it can prove.

3.3. The entanglement of facts and values

The ideology of pure logic rests on a clean line between facts and values. Facts describe how things are. Values express preferences about how things should be. Logic and science belong on the factual side. Sabda and morality are grouped with values and treated as secondary. This division promises clarity. It allows logic to claim that it deals with truth, while values become matters of choice.

In practice, however, the line is much less clean. Scientific work begins with decisions about which phenomena are worth measuring, which differences matter, and which outcomes count as significant. These are not purely factual questions. They involve judgements about relevance and importance. The way a study of unemployment is designed, for example, reflects value laden assumptions about which lives and activities count as "employment" and why.

Even the selection and use of categories in science carries normative weight. Classifying behaviours, bodies, or cultures involves choices that can reinforce or challenge existing patterns of power. Describing a pattern as "disorder" rather than "difference", or as "risk" rather than "variation", is not a neutral act. The categories we use to describe facts shape what we perceive as problems and what we treat as acceptable.

Legal practice shows the same entanglement. A court does not simply discover facts and then apply rules like a machine. It decides which facts are relevant, which testimonies are credible, and which harms are serious enough to merit redress. These decisions are guided by normative understandings of dignity, responsibility, and fairness. If those understandings are treated as mere preferences, the entire claim that law is more than organised force begins to erode.

When facts and values are thus intertwined, it becomes difficult to maintain the idea that truth belongs exclusively on the factual side. Values are present at every stage of inquiry, not only at the moment of drawing moral conclusions. They guide attention, shape concepts, and inform judgements of significance. This does not mean that anything goes. It means that the pursuit of truth is already normatively structured, whether we admit it or not. Philosophers of science have shown that such value laden choices are not accidental noise but structural features of inquiry itself (Putnam, 2002; MacIntyre, 1988).

Pure logic can respond by insisting that these value elements should themselves be brought under rational control, perhaps through procedures of public justification or consensus. That

response is important, but it does not erase the basic point. There is no view from nowhere. Even the attempt to regulate values rationally presupposes some prior sense of what counts as a good reason and a justifiable arrangement. At that depth, the clean separation between facts and values starts to look like a convenient fiction.

From the perspective of The Cohesive Tetrad, this is exactly what we should expect. Qualia reminds us that experience and evaluation are never entirely separable. Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment show that how we seek and use knowledge is already a moral matter. Sabda provides the horizon within which values are not mere preferences, but responses to a prior order of norm and telos. When pure logic denies this, it does not remove normativity. It merely obscures its sources.

3.4. Dignity without depth

Perhaps the most revealing test for pure logic is the case of human dignity. Modern legal and political orders frequently appeal to dignity as the ground of rights that cannot be traded away. Constitutions, treaties, and court decisions speak as if there were something in the human being that demands respect regardless of social status, productivity, or usefulness. This language functions, in effect, as a kind of secularised Sabda. It names a claim that does not originate in human agreement alone. Contemporary human rights instruments and ethics frameworks for artificial intelligence invoke dignity in precisely this quasi foundational way, often treating it as the non negotiable basis for rights and constraints on power (Jobin et al., 2019; Floridi and Cowls, 2019; OECD, 2019; UNESCO, 2021).

Within the ideology of pure logic, however, it is difficult to explain why such language should be taken at face value. If all normativity must be expressed in naturalistic terms, then dignity must eventually be reduced to something like social consensus, evolutionary advantage, or psychological well being. Each of these reductions carries a cost.

If dignity is grounded in consensus, then its content is only as stable as the agreement that supports it. When groups with different interests negotiate, the strong may manage to reshape the consensus in ways that erode protections for the vulnerable. In such a case, the language of "inviolable" rights begins to look like rhetoric that hides the underlying play of power.

If dignity is grounded in evolutionary advantage, it becomes a moving target. Traits that are advantageous in one ecological or technological context may be disadvantageous in another. There is no particular reason, within a strict evolutionary frame, to treat all members of the species as equally worthy of respect. Those whose traits are judged less adaptive might then be accorded weaker claims.

If dignity is grounded in psychological well being, it risks collapsing into a form of refined preference satisfaction. Protecting dignity becomes equivalent to ensuring that individuals feel respected and valued. While this is not trivial, it does not reach the level of an unconditional claim. In situations where the satisfaction of some would require serious costs from others, mere well being does not explain why some harms should never be done, even if they would produce large aggregate benefits.

In practice, courts and human rights bodies often treat dignity as if it had a depth that none of these reductions can capture. They speak as if there were indeed a telos inscribed in the human

being that places limits on what can be done to a person, even by a unanimous decision of a majority. They act as if some things are wrong, not only by current consensus, but by a standard that judges consensus.

Pure logic depends on this deeper grammar, yet cannot generate it. It can describe how dignity talk functions, it can measure its social effects, it can incorporate it into decision procedures. But it cannot, on its own grounds, explain why dignity should be honoured when it conflicts with collective interest or individual preference. In requiring logic to fill this role, the ideology of pure logic demands from logic a kind of authority that logic itself cannot justify.

From the standpoint of The Cohesive Tetrad, this is evidence of a hidden Sabda. Modern institutions continue to act as if there were an order of norm and telos that precedes human agreement. They do not call it revelation, but they treat it as something that speaks with more than human authority. The gap between their official allegiance to pure logic and their practical reliance on quasi revelatory dignity language is a sign of internal tension, not of stable balance.

3.5. Interim conclusion: logic at the edge of its mandate

The internal critique developed in this section can be stated briefly. Pure logic, when it tries to serve as the sole sovereign of rationality, finds itself in a position it cannot defend without covert help. It depends on forms of trust that it cannot derive from its own methods. It works within a field of entangled facts and values that it did not create. It relies on concepts of dignity and telos that carry more weight than its naturalistic vocabulary can bear.

None of this means that logic is dispensable. On the contrary, the analysis shows how much we need logical disciplines to clarify, test, and restrain our claims. What fails is not logic itself, but the attempt to make logic the only legitimate language of truth. When logic is asked to carry that burden, it either collapses into scepticism or borrows, without acknowledgment, from the very domains it pretends to leave behind.

This is the opening in which The Cohesive Tetrad must be placed. The problem is not that logic is too strong, but that it has been given the wrong office. It has been treated as a king, when in reality it is called to be a minister. The task of the next section is to present The Cohesive Tetrad as an architecture in which Sabda, Logic, Qualia, and Mistika can each exercise their proper role in truth governance, with Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment serving as long term diagnostics of integrity.

4. The Cohesive Tetrad as an Architecture of Truth Governance

The internal critique of pure logic leaves us with an unresolved task. We have seen that the ideology of pure logic cannot fully justify its own norms of inference, cannot contain the entanglement of facts and values, and cannot ground the depth of human dignity that modern institutions presuppose. Yet critique by itself is not enough. If pure logic is not sufficient as an architecture of truth governance, what can take its place without collapsing into arbitrariness or nostalgia.

The Cohesive Tetrad is proposed as an answer to that architectural question, not as a loose metaphor but as a structured configuration of domains of truth that can be examined and contested. Building on earlier work that introduced The Cohesive Tetrad as a philosophical and

ethical framework for truth governance (Mutaqin, 2025a, 2025b), this section presents the framework explicitly as an architecture. It distinguishes six core elements and their relations:

1. Sabda as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos.
2. Logic as the domain of formal and inferential reasoning.
3. Qualia as the field of lived, embodied, and social experience.
4. Mistika as Mistika, the intentional spiritual dimension of journeying toward direct encounter with the transcendent.
5. Akhlak as the observable moral character that emerges over time.
6. Intention-Trace Alignment as Intention-Trace Alignment, the degree of alignment between epistemic intention and epistemic moral trace.

The aim of this section is descriptive and evaluative at once. It describes how The Cohesive Tetrad understands truth as articulated across several domains, and it evaluates how such an arrangement can make better sense of existing practices of law and artificial intelligence than the ideology of pure logic. The movement is from a monolingual picture of truth to a multi domain picture in which each domain has its own integrity and its own characteristic distortions when it is isolated.

4.1. From monolingual to multi domain truth

Under the ideology of pure logic, truth is imagined as a monolingual regime. There is one proper language of serious discourse, namely the language of logic and empirical science. Moral and spiritual vocabularies may have expressive or motivational value, but they are not treated as carriers of truth in the same sense. At best, they are translated into more neutral terms; at worst, they are relegated to private conviction.

The Cohesive Tetrad proposes a different picture. It begins from the observation that in actual human life, claims to truth already come in several registers. There are assertions that certain events really happened, that certain causal relations really obtain, that certain actions are truly just or unjust, that certain experiences manifest grace or abandonment, that certain lives exhibit integrity or corruption. These are not simply different feelings about the same neutral facts. They are different kinds of truth claim.

Within the architecture of The Cohesive Tetrad, these different kinds of claim are not forced into one mould, nor are they left in chaos. Each domain is named, given a distinct role, and placed in relation to the others.

Sabda names the primary source of norm and telos. It denotes the conviction that human beings are addressed by a Word they did not invent, a Word that speaks with authority about what they are for and how they may live.

Logic names the practices through which claims are articulated, connected, tested, and systematised, including the disciplines of formal inference and empirical confirmation.

Qualia names the domain in which the consequences of truth claims are felt and observed in personal and communal life, including the atmosphere of trust, fear, hope, and harm that accumulates around institutions and technologies.

Mistika names the orientation and purification of intention in the search for truth and in the exercise of power, including the disciplines by which communities scrutinise the loves and fears that steer their reasoning.

Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment provide the long term diagnostics. They ask whether the character formed by a regime of truth and the observable traces of its actions over time genuinely correspond to the telos it professes.

Moving from a monolingual to a multi domain regime does not mean that anything counts as truth. It means that claims are judged within the domain to which they belong and in their relations to other domains. The question is no longer whether logic alone can decide everything, but whether logic is well positioned within the whole architecture.

4.2. Sabda: the authoritative source of norm and telos

Sabda, in the sense used here, refers to Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos. It does not refer only to one religious tradition or one corpus of sacred texts. It denotes the more basic conviction that human beings are addressed by a Word they did not author, a Word that both calls and commands, promises and judges.

Several clarifications are necessary.

First, Sabda is not opposed to rationality. It is not a licence for arbitrariness. In many traditions, the reception of revelation is accompanied by rigorous disciplines of interpretation, argument, and moral testing (Nasr, 1989; Taylor, 1989). Sabda does not abolish the need for argument, interpretation, and evidence. What it does is to establish that some truths, especially those concerning ultimate telos and inviolable dignity, are not inferred from human preferences or social contracts but received as binding.

Second, Sabda is not simply one domain of discourse among others. It occupies a structurally superior position in The Cohesive Tetrad. When Sabda speaks credibly about norm and telos, it tells us not only what kinds of actions are permitted or forbidden, but what kinds of life count as wise or foolish, and what purposes can claim to be worthy of a human being. Without such a source, institutions tend to oscillate between thin proceduralism and thick but unstable moralities constructed from shifting consensus. The persistent appeal to human dignity in legal and political discourse can be read as an implicit recognition that something like Sabda is needed, even when the name is not used (Habermas, 2008; UNESCO, 2021).

Third, Sabda is not self interpreting. It is always received through history, language, and community. Different traditions and schools develop competing accounts of what Sabda requires in particular circumstances. For that reason, The Cohesive Tetrad does not romanticise Sabda as a pure voice that bypasses human mediation. Rather, it places Sabda at the head of an architecture that includes logic, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment as instruments of testing, correction, and purification. Misuse of revelation, including violent or oppressive interpretations, can and must be judged by their failure to align with the telos and character that Sabda itself proclaims.

From the perspective of The Cohesive Tetrad, modern institutions often live on a hidden Sabda. They appeal to unconditional dignity and non negotiable rights, they speak about wrongs that

cannot be justified even by majority will, yet they are reluctant to name any source of norm and telos beyond human agreement (Putnam, 2002; Jobin et al., 2019). The task of this architecture is not to impose one religious tradition on public life, but to make explicit the dependence of truth governance on a source deeper than consensus and to bring that dependence under disciplined governance.

4.3. Logic: disciplined instrument and shared medium

In the architecture of The Cohesive Tetrad, logic is given a role that is both honoured and limited. It is honoured as a disciplined craft that clarifies claims, tests coherence, and makes disagreement visible. It is limited in that it is not allowed to define norm and telos on its own.

Logic serves at least three central functions.

First, logic is a clarifying instrument. It forces vague appeals to Sabda, experience, or conscience to take a form that can be examined: propositions, arguments, models, and procedures. In this role, logic protects Sabda from being reduced to slogans and protects Qualia from being dismissed as mere feeling. Clarification does not equal reduction, but without clarification, self deception is far too easy.

Second, logic is a testing instrument. It examines whether claims about revelation, experience, or institutional design are internally coherent and whether their premises actually support the conclusions drawn from them. In law and artificial intelligence this includes scrutiny of legal arguments, policy justifications, and algorithmic models. Logic reveals when pious language hides contradictions, when noble intentions clash with actual rules, and when models produce patterns of harm that their creators deny (Fuller, 1964; O'Neil, 2016; Mittelstadt et al., 2016).

Third, logic is a shared medium in plural settings. In societies where citizens are formed by different traditions of Sabda and different histories of suffering, the space of public reasoning cannot rely on one sacred language. Logic provides a partial common ground. It does not erase deep disagreements, but it offers a grammar in which those disagreements can be articulated and contested without immediate resort to force. In this sense, logic cooperates with discursive ideals in legal and political theory that seek public justification across worldviews (Habermas, 1996).

The crucial point is that logic does not generate telos. It cannot, by itself, tell us what human beings are for or why certain harms are intolerable. Logic can show that some goals are inconsistent or self defeating, it can reveal that certain policies contradict declared principles, but it cannot confer intrinsic worth on persons. In The Cohesive Tetrad, logic is therefore relieved of the impossible task of grounding ultimate purposes and returned to its rightful task of serving them.

4.4. Qualia: experiential registration and evaluative feedback

Qualia, in this framework, names the domain of lived, embodied, and communal experience. It includes the felt sense of safety or threat in a neighbourhood, the atmosphere of trust or fear in a courtroom, the dignity or humiliation experienced by those subjected to an algorithmic decision, and the long term patterns of hope or despair that cluster around institutions. Qualia

is not only about individual sentiments. It is the invisible atmosphere that a regime of truth produces over time.

Under the ideology of pure logic, Qualia tends to be treated as noise. Experiences are important because they can be measured and aggregated, but their qualitative texture is not recognised as a domain of truth. The aim is to convert feelings into data points that can be processed by the same logic as any other variable. The result is a loss of sensitivity. Situations in which procedures are formally fair but experientially oppressive are hard to describe, and therefore hard to correct (Fricker, 2007; Medina, 2013).

Within The Cohesive Tetrad, Qualia has three main functions.

First, it operates as a field of registration. It registers how regimens of law, policy, and technology are actually lived. Testimonies of those who bear the heaviest burdens, patterns of trauma or resilience, and shifts in communal trust all become part of the truth record. When communities report that a legal system or an algorithmic practice consistently produces fear, humiliation, or invisibility, Qualia signals possible misalignment, even if the underlying rules look tidy on paper (O'Neil, 2016; Zuboff, 2019).

Second, Qualia provides reasons that are not simply reducible to formal arguments. A survivor's account of how a process felt, a community's narrative about how a platform has reshaped its relationships, or a patient's description of how a medical protocol erodes agency are not mere emotions. They are sources of knowledge about what a system is doing to persons. Such experiential knowledge is not infallible, but it is not irrational. It can and must be weighed in light of Sabda, logic, and Mistika.

Third, Qualia connects Sabda and institutional design. Sabda speaks about mercy, justice, and care for the vulnerable. Qualia reveals whether institutions that invoke such language actually manifest those qualities. When there is persistent divergence between official commitments and lived experience, Qualia presses for reform. It also provides a field in which communities can learn to perceive more accurately, to name subtle forms of harm, and to resist narratives that normalise injustice.

In this way, Qualia acts as a continuous evaluative feedback loop. It asks not only whether decisions are formally correct, but what kind of world is being produced when this regime of truth is applied.

4.5. Mistika: purification of intention and depth of seeking

Mistika refers to Mistika, the intentional spiritual dimension of journeying toward direct encounter with the transcendent. In The Cohesive Tetrad, Mistika focuses on the orientation of the heart and will in the search for truth and in the exercise of authority. It draws attention to the fact that reasoning is always carried by agents, and agents are moved by loves, fears, and loyalties that shape what they are willing to see.

This domain matters because the use of logic and evidence is never purely mechanical. Two scholars can work with the same data and the same methods yet reach very different conclusions because their underlying intentions diverge. One may be animated by a desire for status or victory, another by a desire to understand and to serve. The patterns of motivated

reasoning documented in psychology are symptoms of this deeper layer, where the will quietly steers perception and argument (Kunda, 1990).

Mistika names both a diagnostic and a corrective dimension. As diagnosis, it asks uncomfortable questions. Why is this inquiry being pursued. What kind of self and community are being formed through this practice of reasoning. Which loves, fears, and loyalties are silently steering the way evidence is selected, handled, and presented. As correction, Mistika points to the disciplines that different traditions have developed in order to purify intention: practices of examination of conscience, communal discernment, ascetic restraint, and humble listening to those who suffer.

In relation to law and artificial intelligence, Mistika requires that designers, judges, and policymakers examine the spiritual shape of their work. A legal scholar can produce formally impeccable arguments in defence of a policy that quietly entrenches contempt for certain groups. An engineer can optimise a recommender system in ways that increase engagement at the cost of deepening addiction and polarisation. In both cases, there may be no obvious logical error, yet there is a misalignment between intention and the telos revealed in Sabda. Mistika places such misalignments within the field of truth governance rather than leaving them in the realm of private morality.

4.6. Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment: long term diagnostics

Akhlak in this framework refers to the observable moral character of persons and communities that emerges over time under a regime of truth. It includes traits such as honesty, courage, mercy, and intellectual humility. Intention-Trace Alignment adds a further dimension. It examines the degree of alignment between epistemic intention and epistemic moral trace, that is, between what agents say they seek in their pursuit of knowledge and the actual patterns of effect their practices leave behind in the world.

Together, Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment function as slow but powerful diagnostics. They are concerned less with isolated decisions and more with trajectories. They allow us to ask questions such as: over years or decades, what kind of people does this regime of truth form. Are the stated norms and telos embodied in actual practices. When there is a mismatch, is it accidental, or is it structural.

This diagnostic emphasis resonates with developments in virtue epistemology and the empirical study of intellectual character, which have argued that stable dispositions such as intellectual humility and open mindedness are central to reliable inquiry (Zagzebski, 1996; Roberts and Wood, 2007; Baehr, 2011; Krumrei-Mancuso and Rouse, 2016). The Cohesive Tetrad extends this concern beyond individual agents to institutions. It asks what kind of Akhlak is statistically encouraged or discouraged by particular legal procedures or technological architectures, and whether the long term trace of those systems aligns with their professed intentions.

If the architecture of truth governance is sound, occasional failures will occur but persistent patterns of hypocrisy should be corrected. When, by contrast, decades of evidence show that certain procedures routinely produce deception, cruelty, or epistemic arrogance, Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment treat this not as incidental noise but as a sign that the architecture

itself is misaligned. The distance between what is said and what is lived will not close until the underlying arrangement of domains is revised.

This diagnostic function is important because it honours time. Many harms of law and technology become visible only after long use. By incorporating long term character and trace into the very definition of truth governance, The Cohesive Tetrad resists the temptation to judge systems solely at the point of decision, and insists on following their moral wake.

4.7. Structural relations inside The Cohesive Tetrad

The domains of The Cohesive Tetrad are not loosely associated ideas. They stand in structured relations that matter for truth governance.

There is, first, a vertical relation of authority. Sabda stands at the top as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos. This does not mean that every claimed revelation is automatically true or binding. It means that, within this architecture, any claim about ultimate purpose or inviolable dignity is ultimately tested by its fidelity to Sabda, not by its popularity or short term usefulness. Without this vertical reference, language about dignity risks shrinking into a sophisticated way of describing preferences.

There is, second, a set of horizontal relations of mutual correction. Logic, Qualia, and Mistika question and refine each other. Logic examines whether interpretations of Sabda and narratives of experience are coherent and whether claims about inner purity are consistent with observable behaviour. Qualia reveals when systems that are formally sound still produce patterns of harm that contradict the telos of Sabda. Mistika discloses how pride, fear, or idolatrous attachment to power can distort both logical reasoning and the handling of experience. No domain is left unchecked. Each is given neighbours with the capacity to expose its excesses and blind spots.

Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment operate across these relations as longitudinal audits. They do not add a new domain of content, but a temporal dimension. They ask whether the architecture, as actually implemented, honours its own claims over time. In this sense, The Cohesive Tetrad is not only a map of domains, but a design for ongoing processes of interaction, correction, and assessment.

4.8. How The Cohesive Tetrad answers the failures of pure logic

The earlier critique of pure logic identified at least four structural vulnerabilities. The architecture could not ground its own norms without hidden trust, could not sustain hard evidentialism without collapsing into scepticism, could not maintain a strict fact value divide in practice, and could not give robust account of human dignity. The architecture of The Cohesive Tetrad speaks directly to each of these points.

The problem of self grounding is addressed by recognising that logic and evidence are not self legitimating, but rest on prior reception of Sabda. The commitment to truth and the conviction that reality is intelligible are themselves construed as responses to a Word that calls and authorises inquiry. Logic retains room for philosophical reflection on its own norms, but situates that reflection within a larger horizon.

The limits of hard evidentialism are answered by integrating trust, character, and experience into the structure of rationality. Trust in testimony and institutions, the Akhlak of epistemic agents, and the Qualia of communities affected by decisions are acknowledged as normal components of responsible belief, not as anomalies to be explained away. Evidence remains central, but what counts as evidence is enlarged in a disciplined way.

The entanglement of facts and values is no longer an embarrassment that must be hidden. It becomes an explicit feature of the architecture. The pursuit of truth is seen as always already ethical, because it is guided by Sabda, carried out by agents whose Mistika is never neutral, and evaluated by its effects on communal Qualia and Akhlak. Attempts to pretend that inquiry is value free are treated as forms of self deception, not as ideals.

The fragile status of dignity is strengthened by placing it under Sabda rather than under consensus or utility. Dignity becomes a specification of telos, not a projection of preference. At the same time, dignity claims are not immune from critique. They are subject to scrutiny through Qualia, Mistika, and logic, and their authenticity is tracked by Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment. This combination allows institutions to speak a strong language of inviolable worth without granting unchecked power to any human authority that claims to speak in the name of dignity.

In each case, the solution is not to remove logic, but to lift from logic the demand to be everything. When logic is repositioned within The Cohesive Tetrad, its strengths can be used without overreach, and its weaknesses can be identified and corrected.

4.9. Logic's dignity in a truthful architecture

The picture that emerges is not a humiliation of logic. On the contrary, The Cohesive Tetrad rescues logic from an impossible mandate and grants it a role that is more realistic and more honourable. Logic is no longer asked to provide its own ultimate justification, to purify inquiry from all values, or to breathe moral content into concepts of dignity that do not fit its naturalistic frame.

Instead, logic is honoured as the craft that keeps every domain intellectually honest at the level of structure and inference. It remains essential to science, to law, and to technological design. No interpretation of Sabda, no claim about Qualia, no practice of Mistika, and no judgement about Akhlak is exempt from logical scrutiny. Logic continues to demand coherence, to expose contradiction, and to insist that reasons be offered.

What changes is that logic now operates under a redefined horizon. It is explicitly oriented toward Sabda, receptive to Qualia, chastened by Mistika, and answerable to the long term diagnostics of Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment. Its proper glory lies in serving a truth that is larger than itself rather than pretending to be the whole of truth.

In this sense, the architecture of The Cohesive Tetrad offers a way for institutions to remain rational while acknowledging their dependence on sources of norm and telos that logic alone cannot produce. This prepares the ground for the next sections of the article, which show how the architecture can be brought to bear on two domains in which the ideology of pure logic is both powerful and fragile, namely legal rationality and the governance of artificial intelligence.

5. Legal Rationality under Pure Logic and The Cohesive Tetrad

Law is one of the clearest places where the promises and failures of the ideology of pure logic become concrete. Courts and legal systems claim to be guided by reasons, evidence, and procedures rather than by whim or passion. Legal rationality is therefore an ideal testing ground for any architecture of truth governance. If an architecture fails here, it fails where human vulnerability and institutional power most directly meet.

In this section, I first describe how the ideology of pure logic reshapes legal thought and practice. I then identify structural blind spots that appear when legal rationality is centred on pure logic. Finally, I reconstruct legal rationality within the architecture of The Cohesive Tetrad, with Sabda, logic, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment each playing a distinct role. Law becomes a field in which the contrast between the two architectures can be observed rather than merely asserted.

5.1. Law under the ideology of pure logic

When the ideology of pure logic takes hold in legal thought, several tendencies appear together.

Law is first of all reimagined as an autonomous system. Its legitimacy is located primarily in internal coherence and procedural regularity. Rules and precedents are interpreted in ways that preserve systemic consistency. Legal actors learn to think of law as a self contained order that can be justified by its own principles, with minimal reference to any external source of norm and telos. This autonomy is seen as rational because it insulates law from arbitrary shifts in politics and from sectarian appeals to revelation.

At the same time, the separation between facts and values is hardened. Facts are assigned to the realm of evidence, while values are confined to the realm of policy or personal belief. Courts focus on fact finding and rule application, while broader questions about the purposes of law, the shape of a just society, or the meaning of dignity are treated as matters for legislatures or private conscience. Moral and spiritual insight is pushed to the margins or dressed in cautious abstractions.

The language of dignity, rights, and justice does not disappear. On the contrary, it is invoked frequently in constitutional texts, treaties, and judicial opinions. But under the ideology of pure logic, this language tends to be recoded as a sophisticated way of talking about interests and procedures. Dignity becomes a label for certain outcomes after the fact, not a primary source of norm. Rights become tools for balancing competing claims, rather than expressions of an order that judges both state and society.

Finally, the actors inside the legal system are encouraged to understand themselves primarily as technicians of rules. Their task is to interpret texts, weigh evidence, and apply standards in a way that can be defended as formally rational. The cultivation of Akhlak, the formation of character, and the long moral trace of decisions are regarded as private matters. As long as judges and lawyers avoid obvious corruption and follow accepted procedures, the deeper question of what kind of people the system is forming is rarely asked.

This configuration has strengths. It restrains arbitrary authority, encourages consistency, and allows many disputes to be resolved without direct conflict over ultimate beliefs (Fuller, 1964;

Dworkin, 1986; Habermas, 1996). At the same time, it prepares the ground for characteristic failures. By centring legal rationality on pure logic, it trains itself to treat all normativity as derivative, all experience as secondary, and all questions of telos as negotiable.

5.2. Structural blind spots of logic centred legal rationality

When legal rationality is shaped primarily by pure logic, several structural blind spots emerge.

First, there is a tendency toward procedural absolutism. If the legitimacy of law is defined almost entirely by whether the correct procedures have been followed, then deep injustices can be rationalised as acceptable as long as they are "by the book". Decisions that devastate lives can be defended on the ground that the court had no choice once the facts were established and the rules correctly applied. Appeals to mercy, equity, or higher normativity are reframed as dangerous invitations to arbitrariness. In effect, legality and justice are quietly treated as identical, even when their divergence is plain.

Second, the experiences of those who live under the law are easily marginalised. Proceduralism tends to recognise only those voices that fit established categories and forms of evidence. Testimonies that do not match existing scripts are discounted as irrelevant or unreliable. The Qualia of law, the atmosphere it creates in the lives of those who encounter it, is seldom treated as a source of knowledge. As scholarship on epistemic injustice has shown, this leads to patterns in which certain groups are systematically disbelieved or misheard, and in which their suffering does not register as a reason to reconsider the system itself (Fricker, 2007; Medina, 2013).

Third, the moral formation of legal actors is neglected. Judges, prosecutors, police, and lawyers wield significant power over the lives of others. Yet under a logic centred conception, as long as they avoid clear conflicts of interest and gross misconduct, the inner shape of their character is outside the frame of legal rationality. Virtues such as intellectual humility, courage to resist unjust norms, and truthful listening to marginalised voices are treated as admirable extras, not as structural components of the system. Work in virtue epistemology suggests that this neglect undermines the reliability of legal reasoning itself (Zagzebski, 1996; Roberts and Wood, 2007; Baehr, 2011).

Fourth, the concept of dignity becomes hollow. Courts invoke human dignity to limit punishment, to prohibit degrading treatment, or to protect autonomy. Yet if dignity is not anchored in Sabda or an equivalent source of norm and telos, it risks becoming a rhetorical device. In hard cases, arguments about dignity can be used on both sides, and outcomes may depend less on a stable conception of the person than on institutional inertia or political pressure. Over time, dignity can be reinterpreted in ways that accommodate dominant interests rather than protect the vulnerable (Putnam, 2002; MacIntyre, 1988).

These blind spots do not appear because legal actors are unusually wicked. They arise from the architecture itself. When pure logic is given primacy in legal rationality, it narrows the field of what counts as a reason, silences parts of experience that do not fit its categories, and leaves the system without a fully articulated source of norm and telos. The next step is to consider how legal rationality changes when it is repositioned within The Cohesive Tetrad.

5.3. Repositioning legal rationality within The Cohesive Tetrad

When legal rationality is placed inside the architecture of The Cohesive Tetrad, the position and function of its elements are reconfigured.

Sabda addresses law first at the level of telos. Law is not simply a set of rules for coordinating behaviour. It is a communal response to the Revelatory Word that names justice, mercy, and protection of the vulnerable as central concerns. Sabda reminds legislators and judges that certain outcomes are unacceptable, even if they could be defended by strict reading of texts or by majority preference. It places limits on punishment, on exploitation, and on the instrumentalisation of persons that cannot be altered by vote.

Logic then takes up its role as disciplined instrument inside this horizon. It is responsible for clarifying the content of legal norms, testing the coherence of statutes and precedents, and ensuring that decisions follow from reasons that can be publicly articulated. Logic preserves many of the achievements of modern legal theory, including demands for transparency, non arbitrariness, and consistency (Fuller, 1964; Dworkin, 1986). The crucial difference is that logic no longer claims to define the whole of legal rationality. It serves a telos it did not invent.

Qualia becomes an acknowledged register of legal truth. The atmosphere in courts, the way victims and accused persons experience proceedings, the patterns of fear or trust that law produces over time, are treated as evidence about the moral quality of the system. Testimonies about humiliation, exclusion, or healing are not mere "feelings" to be bracketed, but signals that the law is either approximating or betraying its professed telos (Fricker, 2007; Medina, 2013). Procedures that consistently produce fear and silence among vulnerable groups call for structural review, even if they are formally impeccable.

Mistika focuses attention on the intention with which legal power is exercised. It asks whether those who make and apply the law do so in a spirit of service to truth and justice, or in a spirit of self protection, status, and control. In The Cohesive Tetrad, careful discernment of intention is not a private exercise. It belongs to truth governance itself. Institutional cultures that reward adversarial victory at all costs, or that normalise indifference to the poor, are recognised as spiritually disordered even when they obey formal rules (Kunda, 1990; Habermas, 1996).

Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment provide the long term diagnostics. They examine what kind of character the legal system forms in its officers and what moral trace it leaves in society. If over decades a legal order produces patterns of honesty, restraint, courage to confront injustice, and careful listening to the weak, its architecture is vindicated. If it consistently generates cynicism, cruelty, and epistemic arrogance, the misalignment between intention and trace reveals an architectural failure, not merely individual lapses (Zagzebski, 1996; Baehr, 2011; Krumrei-Mancuso and Rouse, 2016).

In this repositioning, legal rationality is not less rational. It is more fully rational because it operates with an explicit account of its source of norm and telos, recognises the epistemic status of experience, attends to the spiritual shape of intention, and measures its own moral wake over time.

5.4. Illustrative patterns: procedure, mercy, and structural harm

The difference between the two architectures can be seen in recurring patterns that have confronted legal systems in many jurisdictions. Three such patterns are sufficient to illustrate the contrast.

The first pattern concerns the relationship between procedure and mercy. Under a logic centred architecture, judges may feel that their only legitimate task is to apply the law as written. Requests for leniency, restorative approaches, or creative solutions that take account of the whole life of the offender are treated with suspicion. Mercy is seen as a potential threat to equality before the law. Under The Cohesive Tetrad, the telos of law includes not only retribution and deterrence but restoration. Sabda speaks of justice that does not crush the bruised, and Qualia registers whether sentencing practices produce renewed life or permanent exclusion. Logic is still needed to prevent arbitrary favouritism, but mercy is no longer an alien element. It is part of what law is for.

The second pattern concerns the treatment of those whose experiences do not fit established categories. Victims of certain forms of violence, especially where trauma affects memory and testimony, have often found that legal procedures do not know what to do with their stories. Pure logic tends to treat deviations from expected narrative structure as signs of unreliability. As work on epistemic injustice shows, this creates a double harm: the original injury is compounded by institutional failure to hear it as knowledge (Fricker, 2007; Medina, 2013). Within The Cohesive Tetrad, Qualia gives these experiences a more secure place. Their difficulty is not a reason to ignore them, but a reason to refine categories and evidentiary practices, guided by Sabda's insistence on care for the vulnerable and by Mistika's concern with truthfulness rather than institutional self protection.

The third pattern concerns structural harm. Legal systems can operate for long periods with formally fair procedures while consistently producing outcomes that disadvantage particular groups. Housing laws, policing practices, and sentencing frameworks may all be individually defensible, yet together they create patterns of exclusion that are visible in statistical disparities and in the lived reality of communities. Under pure logic, these patterns can be dismissed as side effects or as the result of non legal factors. Under The Cohesive Tetrad, Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment treat these patterns as part of the truth record. If the trace of law is persistently misaligned with its professed intention to secure justice for all, reform is indicated, not merely an adjustment of rhetoric (O'Neil, 2016; Zuboff, 2019).

These patterns indicate that the shift proposed by The Cohesive Tetrad is not merely conceptual. It changes what counts as a legal problem, what kinds of evidence are admitted, how institutional self examination is conducted, and which questions are considered legitimate. Law becomes a site where Sabda, logic, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment actively interact, rather than a field governed by logic alone.

5.5. Law as a test field for truth governance

Law is not only one application among others. It is a test field for any serious proposal about truth governance. In law, abstract claims about rationality, dignity, and normativity are forced into contact with concrete cases. Someone must be convicted or acquitted, compensated or

refused, protected or exposed. Decisions cannot be postponed indefinitely. People cannot be left without resolution.

If the ideology of pure logic fails here, the failure is visible in patterns of procedural absolutism, experiential erasure, moral deformation of legal actors, and hollowness in dignity talk. These are not incidental side effects. They are symptoms of an architecture that has tried to make logic bear more weight than it can carry.

If the architecture of The Cohesive Tetrad succeeds here, its success will also be visible. Courts will still reason carefully with texts and precedents, but they will do so openly under a telos they did not invent. They will listen more deeply to the experiences of those most affected. They will cultivate Akhlak in their officers and subject their own institutional history to Intention-Trace analysis. Law will be recognised not only as an instrument of order, but as a rough yet genuine image of justice grounded in Sabda.

For the purposes of this article, the role of law is therefore twofold. It provides a concrete arena in which the contrast between pure logic and The Cohesive Tetrad can be observed. It also functions as a proving ground for assessing whether an architecture of truth governance can support institutions that are both rational and humane. In the next section, this proving ground is extended into the rapidly evolving domain of artificial intelligence, where the temptations and dangers of the ideology of pure logic are intensified and where the need for an alternative architecture like The Cohesive Tetrad becomes even more urgent.

6. Artificial Intelligence under Pure Logic and The Cohesive Tetrad

If law is the classical theatre of rationality, artificial intelligence is its newest and most ambitious stage. In artificial intelligence, the ideal of pure logic appears in technological form. Systems are designed to ingest data, apply formal rules or learned parameters, and produce outputs that are presented as rational, objective, and free from human bias. The promise is familiar: if more decisions are delegated to logically disciplined machines, error, inconsistency, and prejudice may be reduced.

Yet the same questions that trouble pure logic in philosophy and law appear, often in sharper form, in artificial intelligence. What grounds the norms that guide these systems. Who defines the goals they optimise. How are human dignity and telos represented, if at all. This section applies the architecture of The Cohesive Tetrad to artificial intelligence, first by tracing how the ideology of pure logic shapes artificial intelligence, then by exposing its internal tensions, and finally by sketching how artificial intelligence governance might look when reorganised under Sabda, Logic, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment.

6.1. Artificial intelligence as the technological dream of pure logic

Many contemporary artificial intelligence systems are built on assumptions that align closely with the ideology of pure logic. The technical details of algorithms vary, but the underlying picture remains remarkably consistent.

Data is treated as the primary source of factual truth. The more data a system can gather, the more accurate its representation of the world is assumed to be. Models are treated as rational mechanisms that transform inputs into outputs through mathematically specified relations.

Evaluation focuses on measurable performance: accuracy, loss functions, error rates, and similar metrics.

Norms and values, when acknowledged, are often represented as constraints on optimisation or as additional terms in an objective function. Fairness, for instance, may be encoded as a penalty for certain disparities between groups. Privacy may be introduced as a requirement that certain data not be used. Harm may be addressed by post hoc filters that block or adjust particular outputs. Ethical guidelines are then interpreted as constraints around an essentially technical core (Mittelstadt et al., 2016; Floridi and Cowls, 2019; Jobin et al., 2019).

In this configuration, artificial intelligence appears as the realisation of pure logic in code. Systems operate according to rules that are transparent to their designers, or at least to those who understand the models. Human actors are invited to trust these systems because they are consistent, scalable, and free from the subjective fluctuations that plague human judgement.

The language used to promote artificial intelligence often reinforces this image. Systems are described as neutral, evidence based, and rational. Human oversight is portrayed as a safety net, but the main appeal lies in the promise of decision making that is more logical than human intuition. The technological dream of pure logic thus becomes a social and economic project.

6.2. Internal tensions in logic centred artificial intelligence

When artificial intelligence is shaped by the ideology of pure logic, several tensions emerge that mirror, intensify, and extend the problems identified earlier.

First, there is a hidden dependence on norm and telos that the system cannot define for itself. Every artificial intelligence model is trained to optimise something: a prediction, a classification, a ranking, a reward. The choice of objective function is not dictated by the data. It is a decision made by designers and institutions. Narrow goals such as click through rates, time on platform, or short term profit may be mathematically convenient, but they do not capture what human beings are for. When systems optimise these proxies without reference to a higher telos, they can be highly rational within their own closed frame and deeply destructive in human terms (O'Neil, 2016; Zuboff, 2019).

Second, the separation between facts and values collapses in practice. Data used to train artificial intelligence systems reflects human histories, institutions, and prejudices. Labels and categories are infused with prior judgements. Decisions about which errors are more tolerable, which trade offs are acceptable, and which harms are serious enough to prevent are all value laden. Yet under the ideology of pure logic, there is pressure to speak as if models simply learn from the world as it is, without normative commitments. In reality, every choice of dataset, label, and performance metric already expresses a view of whose errors matter and whose suffering counts.

Third, the language of dignity is invoked but not grounded. Artificial intelligence ethics frameworks frequently speak of respect for human rights, dignity, autonomy, and non discrimination. However, if the architecture of artificial intelligence is defined entirely within a naturalistic and logic centred frame, these commitments remain external decorations. There is no inner place in the system where the inviolability of persons is structurally recognised. At best, dignity is approximated through constraints and penalties. At worst, it is quietly

subordinated to performance and efficiency when trade offs become difficult (Jobin et al., 2019; OECD, 2019; UNESCO, 2021).

Fourth, the intentions of those who design and deploy artificial intelligence are often bracketed out of the formal description. Model cards, technical reports, and documentation speak at length about data, architectures, and training, but seldom about the loves and fears that drive the work. Economic incentives, institutional pressures, and personal ambitions are treated as background, even though they can profoundly shape which systems are built, which harms are tolerated, and which communities bear the risk (Kunda, 1990; O'Neil, 2016).

These tensions do not mean that artificial intelligence is inherently corrupt or that logic in code is always harmful. They mean that when artificial intelligence is built and governed under the ideology of pure logic, it inherits the same structural weaknesses: a demand that logic supply what only Sabda can provide, a blindness to the entanglement of facts and values, and a fragile hold on dignity.

6.3. Reframing artificial intelligence within The Cohesive Tetrad

When artificial intelligence is placed inside the architecture of The Cohesive Tetrad, the picture changes. Artificial intelligence remains a powerful tool, but it ceases to be the silent sovereign of rationality. It becomes one instrument among many in the task of truth governance.

From the vantage point of Sabda, artificial intelligence systems are not neutral artefacts. They are part of a larger human calling to seek truth, do justice, and protect the vulnerable. Sabda as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, addresses artificial intelligence in at least three ways.

It reminds designers and institutions that human beings must never be treated merely as data points, resources, or objects of prediction. It declares that some forms of automated decision making are illegitimate, regardless of efficiency, because they violate the dignity of persons as bearers of a higher telos. It sets outer limits on what may be optimised, even when optimisation appears logically possible.

Logic then takes up its role as instrument within this horizon. In artificial intelligence, this means designing models with clarity about their assumptions, constraints, and domains of validity. It involves scrutinising the inferential structures of algorithms, identifying sources of bias and instability, and ensuring that formal properties align with the values that Sabda commands. Logic becomes the craft of making explicit how systems work, rather than the authority that decides what they should ultimately be for (Mittelstadt et al., 2016).

Qualia enters as the domain that registers how artificial intelligence systems are actually lived. It captures experiences of being scored, recommended, profiled, or denied by systems that appear distant and opaque. It records the effects of automated decisions on trust, social cohesion, exclusion, and fear. These experiences are not mere anecdotes. They are part of the evidential base for judging whether artificial intelligence governance is aligned with its professed telos (O'Neil, 2016; Zuboff, 2019).

Mistika attends to the intention behind artificial intelligence. It asks why certain projects are funded while others are neglected. It asks whether the pursuit of artificial intelligence is guided

by humility and service, or by the desire for dominance, profit, and control. It recognises that the same technical skills can support very different spiritual trajectories: one toward deeper responsiveness to Sabda, another toward idolatry of capability and power.

Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment then provide a long term evaluation of artificial intelligence regimes. Over time, what kind of character do artificial intelligence intensive institutions develop. Do they show increasing care for the vulnerable, transparency, and accountability. Or do they become more opaque, more indifferent to collateral damage, more comfortable with treating persons as data. The gap between declared principles and observable traces is, again, not an external critique. It is a central diagnostic of whether artificial intelligence governance is truthful.

6.4. Practical implications: objectives, constraints, and oversight

Reframing artificial intelligence within The Cohesive Tetrad has practical consequences for how systems are conceived, built, and governed. Several areas reveal especially sharp contrasts with the ideology of pure logic.

First, in the definition of objectives. Under a logic centred view, designers often begin with what is technically feasible and economically attractive. Objectives are then defined in terms of efficiency or predictive power. Within The Cohesive Tetrad, objectives must be filtered through Sabda and Qualia before they are formalised. Some goals, such as maximising engagement without regard to psychological harm, are rejected at the outset. Others are accepted only if they can be embedded within a wider telos that gives priority to human flourishing rather than to metrics alone.

Second, in the design of constraints. Pure logic tends to treat constraints as external additions imposed by regulation or public pressure. The Cohesive Tetrad treats certain constraints as intrinsic to truthful architecture. Limits that protect dignity, preserve meaningful human agency, and prevent certain kinds of surveillance or profiling are not optional extras. They are part of the structure that makes artificial intelligence compatible with the telos of human beings (Floridi and Cowls, 2019; OECD, 2019; UNESCO, 2021).

Third, in the organisation of oversight. Under pure logic, oversight is often framed entirely in technical terms: audits of bias, robustness checks, verification of performance. These are necessary but not sufficient. Within The Cohesive Tetrad, oversight must also interrogate intention and trace. It must ask who benefits from the system, whose voices were included or excluded in its design, and whether the long term effects on Akhlak are consistent with the proclaimed aims. Evaluation councils, ethics boards, and regulatory bodies are therefore expected to include not only technical experts, but also communities affected by the systems and persons formed in traditions of moral and spiritual discernment.

Fourth, in the status of refusal. A logic centred regime tends to assume that if a system can be built and if it shows high performance, then the burden of proof lies on those who wish to restrict or delay it. A regime shaped by The Cohesive Tetrad reverses that presumption in certain domains. For some applications, such as automated decisions that deeply affect life, liberty, or the core of personal identity, the burden of proof lies on those who wish to hand power to machines. Sabda and Qualia may together indicate that certain capacities should

remain with human agents who are directly accountable, even if machines could in principle perform the tasks more cheaply or consistently.

These implications do not amount to a technical blueprint. They are architectural constraints and priorities. They state that artificial intelligence governance must be built from the beginning with Sabda, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment in view, not added later as decorations around a core of pure logic.

6.5. Artificial intelligence as amplifier of existing architectures

Artificial intelligence, in the end, amplifies the architecture of truth governance that already exists in a society. If the prevailing regime is shaped by the ideology of pure logic, artificial intelligence will tend to deepen that regime. It will extend the reach of narrow optimisation, entrench the separation of facts and values, and accelerate the erosion of substantive dignity.

If the prevailing regime begins to adopt the architecture of The Cohesive Tetrad, artificial intelligence can be directed and constrained in ways that support, rather than undermine, the integrity of truth. Systems will still optimise, classify, and predict, but they will do so under a telos they did not invent, with attention to lived experience, purified intention, and long term moral trace.

This insight strengthens the central thesis of the article. The real conflict is not between humans and machines, nor between tradition and technology. It is between different architectures of truth. Pure logic, when given sovereignty, leads rationality to fight against the very sources of norm and telos that it needs. The Cohesive Tetrad proposes a different arrangement, in which Sabda remains primary and logic, in its coded and uncoded forms, is restored to its right place as a powerful servant of a higher calling.

7. Objections and Replies

Any proposal that restores Sabda to a structurally primary role in truth governance will attract serious objections. The ideology of pure logic did not emerge in a vacuum. It grew, in part, out of hard lessons about religious conflict, authoritarian misuse of revelation, and the fragility of social peace. If The Cohesive Tetrad is to be taken seriously in a logic sensitive academic forum, it must face those lessons directly.

In this section, I consider five families of objections that arise naturally once Sabda is placed at the centre of an architecture that still claims to honour rationality.

1. The pluralism objection.
2. The public reason objection.
3. The authoritarianism objection.
4. The “which Sabda” and relativism objection.
5. The instrumentalisation objection.

Each objection presses on a real vulnerability. None can be dismissed by appeal to authority alone. The task is to show that the architecture of The Cohesive Tetrad has internal resources to respond in ways that are intelligible and compelling, not only to those who already share its

deepest commitments, but also to those who care about law, artificial intelligence, and human dignity in plural societies.

7.1. The pluralism objection

The first objection begins from a sociological and political fact. Contemporary societies are religiously and morally diverse. Citizens are formed by multiple traditions, including explicitly secular ones. In that context, the claim that Sabda, the Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, should have structural primacy in public architectures of truth appears to some as a recipe for renewed domination. If one community's Sabda is given priority, does that not simply reinstall the very problem The Cohesive Tetrad claims to solve: the rule of one group's deepest convictions over others.

The architecture of The Cohesive Tetrad offers a layered response.

First, it distinguishes between a structural claim and a substantive claim. The structural claim is that some form of Sabda, some sense that norm and telos are received rather than manufactured, is unavoidable in any regime that takes human dignity seriously. Even strongly secular frameworks, when they treat dignity and rights as unconditional, in practice appeal to an authority that transcends shifting preference and power, even if they refuse to name it as Sabda (Putnam, 2002; Habermas, 1996; UNESCO, 2021). The substantive claim, by contrast, concerns which concrete interpretation of Sabda should guide a given community. The architecture insists that the first claim can be defended without prematurely settling the second.

Second, the architecture gives logic a non trivial role in mediating between competing claims. Different traditions advance different accounts of norm and telos. The fact that they appeal to Sabda does not exempt them from rational scrutiny. Logic examines internal coherence, compatibility with minimal human dignity axioms, and the consistency between professed telos and observable trace. Traditions that systematically undermine the very dignity they proclaim, or that cannot give an account of their own norms without contradiction, reveal themselves as unstable candidates for truth governance.

Third, Qualia and Akhlak introduce empirical and moral tests over time. Communities that live under different interpretations of Sabda generate different atmospheres, patterns of harm and healing, and trajectories of character. These long term fruits are not infallible indicators, but they are part of the evidence about which interpretations are life giving and which intensify domination and self deception (Fricker, 2007; Medina, 2013; Zagzebski, 1996; Baehr, 2011). Pluralism is not resolved by abstract comparison alone. It is addressed through the comparative evaluation of long term fruits.

Fourth, The Cohesive Tetrad does not require that all citizens consciously endorse the same thick theology of Sabda. It is possible to distinguish between the architecture of institutions and the interior lives of persons. At the institutional level, Sabda can inform constitutional limits and human rights frameworks in a way that is compatible with overlapping ethical convictions, even among those who do not share the same religious narrative (Habermas, 1996). At the personal level, citizens can continue to interpret those limits through their own traditions and reasons. Logic plays an important role in identifying and stabilising these zones of overlap.

The pluralism objection therefore reveals a genuine tension, but not a fatal one. It shows that the architecture must acknowledge pluralism and resist triumphalism. It does not show that a logic centred framework, which hides its dependence on unacknowledged fragments of Sabda, is more honest or more stable.

7.2. The public reason objection

A second objection concerns public accessibility. Modern doctrines of public reason argue that in diverse societies, political justification should be grounded in reasons that all citizens can, in principle, accept, regardless of their comprehensive doctrines. References to revelation are often treated as privately meaningful but publicly inadmissible. From this angle, The Cohesive Tetrad looks problematic. If Sabda holds structural primacy, does that not violate the demand that citizens be able to justify coercive laws in terms their neighbours can share.

Here it is crucial to distinguish several levels.

At the deepest level, every comprehensive doctrine, including secular liberalism, rests on commitments that are not derivable from neutral premises. Convictions about the equal moral worth of persons, about the priority of liberty, or about the necessity of public justification are themselves ethical theses that cannot be established by logic and empirical evidence alone. The claim that citizens must be able to justify laws to one another in shared terms is already a normative commitment, not a pure deliverance of reason (Habermas, 1996; Putnam, 2002).

At the level of institutional practice, however, it remains important that coercive laws be justifiable to those who do not share the same explicit theology of Sabda. The Cohesive Tetrad can accommodate this by adopting a two level approach to public reason.

At the foundational level, scholars, judges, and policymakers are explicit about the deep commitments that inform their understanding of human beings and ultimate limits, including their reliance on Sabda as the authoritative source of norm and telos. These commitments are articulated and defended in full, without pretending to be neutral.

At the operational level, when laws and policies are debated and applied, reasons are offered in terms that are accessible across traditions, provided they are coherent with the deeper commitments and do not smuggle in interests that cannot be justified even on their own terms. Arguments about the wrongness of torture, the impermissibility of degrading treatment, or the need to protect vulnerable groups can be made in a language of dignity and harm that interlocutors from multiple traditions can grasp, even if their ultimate theologies differ (Habermas, 1996; UNESCO, 2021).

The demand of public reason thus becomes not a prohibition against Sabda, but a discipline of translation and humility. It requires that those who act from Sabda be willing to explain and defend their proposals in a way that others can follow and contest. Pure logic does not have a monopoly on public accessibility. What matters is whether the reasons offered can be understood, not whether they are rooted in an allegedly neutral metaphysics.

7.3. The authoritarianism objection

A third objection warns that any architecture which grants primacy to Sabda risks sliding into authoritarianism. History contains many examples of religious authorities who claimed to speak for revelation and used that claim to crush dissent, justify violence, and shield themselves from accountability. Placing Sabda at the centre of truth governance may seem to many like building a more elaborate vocabulary for theocracy.

The danger is real. The Cohesive Tetrad does not deny the long record of misuse. It proposes, however, that precisely because revelation can be misused, it should be placed within an architecture that multiplies checks rather than removing them.

First, Sabda in this framework is not self validating at the level of human interpretation. That Sabda is Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, does not mean that any group's claim to represent it is automatically true. Interpretations must be tested by logic for coherence, by minimal human dignity axioms for compatibility, and by their long term fruits for integrity. A regime that appeals to Sabda but systematically degrades persons fails this test.

Second, Qualia functions as a public alarm. If a regime that claims to act in the name of Sabda produces widespread fear, humiliation, and silence among ordinary people, those experiences are relevant evidence. They are not merely emotional reactions. They reveal that the way Sabda is being interpreted and institutionalised may be distorted. Qualia gathers these testimonies and brings them into the field of judgement (Fricker, 2007; Medina, 2013).

Third, Mistika insists on scrutiny of intention. Leaders who invoke Sabda are not granted automatic presumption of purity. Their motives, patterns of life, and responses to criticism fall under examination. Appeals to revelation that are combined with a consistent pattern of self exaltation, contempt for the weak, and refusal of correction are recognised as spiritually disordered. The Cohesive Tetrad brings motive back into the field of governance rather than leaving it to private morality.

Fourth, Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment subject claims to long term evaluation. It is not enough for a regime to state noble principles. Its history must show growth in virtues such as justice, mercy, and truthfulness. Where there is persistent divergence between professed telos and actual trace, the architecture itself is indicted. Over time, this trace speaks more loudly than official rhetoric (Zagzebski, 1996; Roberts and Wood, 2007; Baehr, 2011).

These checks do not make authoritarianism impossible. Human freedom includes the capacity to distort even the best architectures. They do, however, make it harder to sacralise arbitrary power. In contrast, a system that treats pure logic or technical expertise as sovereign can also become authoritarian, but with fewer internal resources for critique, because it has no recognised standard that stands above its calculations.

7.4. The "which Sabda" and relativism objection

A fourth objection presses the question of specificity. Even if one grants that some form of Sabda is structurally necessary, the world contains many claimed Revelatory Words. Within and across traditions, interpretations differ sharply. Who decides which Sabda is true. Does not

the appeal to Sabda simply shift the problem of relativism to a higher level, where each group centres its own version and declares itself justified.

The architecture answers in two stages.

First, it insists on comparative testing. Different claimed Sabda and their associated interpretations can be compared along several dimensions: their internal coherence, their compatibility with minimal human dignity axioms, their capacity to support stable recognition of the equal worth of persons, and their long term Akhlak and Qualia trace. Traditions that endorse cruelty, deny basic equality, or consistently produce patterns of domination and fear are not on a par with those that generate humility, protection of the vulnerable, and readiness to self correct (MacIntyre, 1988; Fricker, 2007; Medina, 2013).

These tests do not produce a mechanical ranking that all parties must accept. They do provide a framework in which rational conversation about "which Sabda" can proceed, rather than collapsing into slogan and force. The fact that deep disagreement remains does not mean that nothing can be said. It means that the work of comparative discernment is long and demanding.

Second, the architecture allows for differentiated roles of Sabda at different levels of political life. At the deepest level, communities may continue to live out their particular articulations of Sabda in worship, teaching, and moral formation. At the civic level, institutions may be structured around minimal affirmations that can be endorsed from multiple angles, such as the unconditional worth of every person and the impermissibility of certain kinds of harm. These affirmations can be seen, from within different traditions, as partial articulations of their own Sabda, without requiring forced homogenisation. This avoids both the illusion that all claims are equally valid and the temptation to impose one thick tradition as the sole public norm (Habermas, 1996; UNESCO, 2021).

Relativism, in the strict sense that all claims are equally valid, is therefore rejected. The Cohesive Tetrad affirms the possibility and necessity of strong judgements, tempered by humility and tested by time.

7.5. The instrumentalisation objection

A final objection comes from another direction. It worries that by placing Sabda inside an architecture, The Cohesive Tetrad turns revelation into a mere instrument. Sabda becomes one component in a human designed framework, subject to analysis and systematisation. For believers, this looks like a loss of transcendence. Sabda should judge all architectures, not be enclosed within one.

This objection is important, especially for readers who belong to traditions that regard revelation as living and sovereign. The response of The Cohesive Tetrad lies in recognising the difference between two levels of discourse.

The first level is confessional. Here Sabda is not an element in a conceptual scheme, but the living Word that calls, commands, and comforts. At this level, any human framework, including The Cohesive Tetrad, is provisional and revisable. Sabda retains the right to overturn, revise, or discard any human construction that presumes to capture it.

The second level is analytic. Here we ask how different domains of truth function in practice and how they can be arranged so that institutions honour rather than betray the telos of human beings. At this level, The Cohesive Tetrad is offered as a model for thinking about truth governance that gives Sabda structural primacy and provides explicit roles for logic, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment. It does not claim to exhaust the mystery of Sabda. It claims only to articulate a way in which Sabda can govern institutions without relying on unchecked human authority or on silent assumptions.

Seen in this light, The Cohesive Tetrad is not a prison for revelation. It is an attempt to design institutional and intellectual space that remains open to being judged by Sabda, while protecting communities from both authoritarian misuse of revelation and the quieter absolutism of pure logic. Its own adequacy is subject to the same tests it applies to other frameworks: coherence, fidelity to minimal dignity axioms, responsiveness to Qualia, purity of Mistika, and the long term Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment of those who adopt it.

7.6. Summary

The objections considered in this section are not peripheral. They arise precisely at the points where the architecture of The Cohesive Tetrad might appear most vulnerable: pluralism, public reason, the risk of authoritarianism, the problem of "which Sabda", and the danger of turning revelation into an instrument. The responses offered do not claim to close these debates. They aim to show that the architecture contains resources to engage them without retreating into either dogmatism or scepticism.

Pluralism is acknowledged and addressed through layered claims, comparative testing, and differentiated roles for Sabda. Public reason is reframed as a discipline of translation and humility, not as a ban on deep commitments. Authoritarianism is resisted by building multiple internal checks on interpretation and power. The "which Sabda" question is faced through long term comparative discernment and overlapping civic affirmations. The risk of instrumentalisation is answered by distinguishing confessional and analytic levels and by insisting that even this architecture remains under the judgement of Sabda.

Taken together, these replies do not remove all grounds for concern. They do, however, suggest that the choice is not between pure logic and unaccountable revelation. The more promising alternative is an architecture in which Sabda, logic, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment are bound together in a disciplined way. The final section draws together the threads of the argument and indicates directions for further research on truth governance under this architecture.

8. Conclusion

This article has asked a simple but unforgiving question. Can the ideology of pure logic, which aspires to govern truth by reason and evidence alone, sustain the weight that contemporary institutions place upon it. The answer has been negative. When examined from within its own standards, pure logic reveals structural weaknesses. It cannot ground its own norms without covert trust. It cannot maintain a strict separation between facts and values in practice. It cannot provide a robust account of human dignity while remaining within a narrow naturalistic frame. Yet these are precisely the dimensions in which modern law and artificial intelligence must be most reliable.

On the way to this conclusion, the article has unfolded in several steps. First, it reconstructed the ideology of pure logic as a serious and attractive architecture. Scientism, hard evidentialism, a hard fact value divide, and strong naturalism about telos and dignity were presented not as straw men, but as coherent tendencies that have migrated from philosophy into institutional common sense. Pure logic presents itself as a guardian against arbitrariness, superstition, and sectarian conflict. It offers a vision of public life organised around reasons that all can in principle inspect. That aspiration was acknowledged as historically understandable and morally significant.

Second, the article developed an internal critique. Without appealing to external authority, it showed how pure logic depends on forms of trust, normativity, and depth that it cannot generate on its own. It rests on basic commitments about the intelligibility of reality and the worth of truth that are not deduced from prior premises. It operates within practices whose categories and standards are already value laden. It borrows the language of dignity and inviolable worth, then struggles to explain why such language should be taken at face value. The problem is not that logic is irrational, but that an ideology which elevates logic to the status of sole sovereign asks it to perform tasks that exceed its mandate.

Third, the article introduced The Cohesive Tetrad as an alternative architecture of truth governance. Rather than treating truth as a monolingual regime, it articulated a multi domain configuration in which Sabda, Logic, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment each have a defined role. Sabda, as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos, provides the horizon within which questions of purpose and dignity are first posed. Logic clarifies and tests, but does not legislate telos. Qualia registers the lived consequences of regimes of truth. Mistika attends to the orientation of intention in inquiry and governance. Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment supply longitudinal diagnostics, asking whether the moral character and trace of institutions align with their professed aims. Taken together, these domains form an architecture that preserves the strengths of logical discipline while correcting its overreach.

Fourth, the article brought this architecture into contact with two crucial fields, law and artificial intelligence. In law, it showed how a logic centred conception of legal rationality tends toward procedural absolutism, experiential erasure, neglect of character, and hollowing out of dignity. By repositioning legal rationality inside The Cohesive Tetrad, it became possible to affirm the achievements of legality while insisting that telos, lived experience, spiritual intention, and long term moral trace are structurally relevant to the evaluation of legal systems. In artificial intelligence, a similar pattern emerged. Pure logic, translated into code, produces systems that optimise narrow objectives while obscuring their dependence on prior value judgements and institutional intentions. Under The Cohesive Tetrad, artificial intelligence is reframed as an instrument that must be oriented by Sabda, constrained by dignity, informed by Qualia, purified by Mistika, and evaluated by Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment.

Fifth, the article faced a series of major objections. Concerns about pluralism, public reason, authoritarian misuse of revelation, the problem of “which Sabda”, and the risk of instrumentalising revelation were addressed directly. The responses were not offered as final victories, but as demonstrations that the architecture can engage these objections without retreating into dogmatic assertion or sceptical resignation. The key move was to distinguish between the structural claim that some order of norm and telos beyond mere preference is necessary for stable recognition of dignity, and the substantive work of discerning how particular traditions of Sabda can shape public life under conditions of diversity and fallibility.

The central theoretical contribution of this article is therefore architectural. It does not propose a new decision rule, a new algorithm, or a new doctrinal formula. It proposes a different way of arranging the domains of truth in relation to each other. In this arrangement, logic is neither dethroned nor deified. It is honoured as an indispensable craft that keeps claims honest, but is prevented from silently displacing the very sources of norm and telos that make its own practice meaningful. The Cohesive Tetrad offers a vocabulary and a framework in which this arrangement can be made explicit, debated, and refined.

The practical contribution lies in the way this architecture can inform ongoing debates in legal and artificial intelligence governance. For law, it suggests criteria for evaluating reforms that go beyond procedural tidiness, asking how changes will affect the Qualia of those who live under the law and the Akhlak of those who administer it. For artificial intelligence, it offers a way to interpret existing ethics guidelines and regulatory proposals in terms of their implicit commitments about Sabda, telos, and dignity, and to identify where these commitments remain underdeveloped or inconsistent. In both fields, the architecture invites a shift from ad hoc balancing of values to a more principled account of how different domains of truth interact.

This article is a beginning, not a conclusion. Several avenues for further research are obvious. The minimal human dignity axioms used here as a normative baseline require more detailed formulation and testing across legal and technological contexts. The application of The Cohesive Tetrad to other domains, such as education, economic policy, or environmental governance, remains to be explored. Empirical and historical work is needed to examine how different institutional arrangements embody, distort, or resist the architecture proposed here. Philosophical engagement with competing accounts of normativity and revelation can refine both the strengths and the limits of the framework.

What the analysis has made difficult to deny is this: the ideology of pure logic, taken as an exclusive architecture of truth governance, cannot carry the moral, legal, and technological burdens placed upon it. It will either collapse into scepticism or continue to rely, unacknowledged, on fragments of Sabda that it refuses to name. The alternative sketched here does not offer an easy settlement. It does, however, propose a way of letting Sabda remain what it claims to be, while allowing logic, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak, and Intention-Trace Alignment to exercise their proper offices. For institutions that wish to remain rational and humane in an age of law and artificial intelligence, that architectural shift may be less an option than a requirement.

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1. Is Sabda only related to one specific religion

No. In this treatise, Sabda is understood as Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos. This includes what different traditions may call divine speech, covenantal law, binding command, or founding revelation. The framework does not attempt to impose a single religious system, but to clarify that any serious account of truth governance must acknowledge a source of norm and purpose that cannot be reduced to human preference, social contracts, or technical optimisation.

2. How does The Cohesive Tetrad relate to virtue epistemology and AI ethics

The Cohesive Tetrad is compatible with, and complementary to, both virtue epistemology and AI ethics. From virtue epistemology it shares the concern for intellectual character, honesty, humility, and responsibility in the pursuit of truth. From AI ethics it shares the concern for transparency, accountability, and harm prevention in the design and deployment of data driven systems. The distinctive contribution of The Cohesive Tetrad is that it places these concerns within an explicit architecture of Sabda, Logic, Qualia, and Mistika, verified through Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment, so that questions of character and design are not detached from questions of norm and telos.

3. How can public policy be audited with The Cohesive Tetrad

Auditing public policy with The Cohesive Tetrad begins by asking how a policy orders Sabda, Logic, Qualia, and Mistika. At the level of Sabda, one asks which normative commitments about human dignity, justice, and purpose are presupposed or neglected. At the level of Logic, one inspects definitions, classifications, and inferences that structure the policy. At the level of Qualia, one listens to how the policy is actually experienced, especially by those most affected or most vulnerable. At the level of Mistika, one examines the integrity of intention and accountability before the transcendent. Finally, the audit traces Akhlak and Intention-Trace Alignment over time, asking whether the policy produces trustworthy, just, and compassionate patterns of behaviour or merely performs concern for dignity at the level of rhetoric.

4. How is The Cohesive Tetrad different from a simple AI ethics checklist

An AI ethics checklist usually names important values, such as fairness, transparency, and accountability, but often treats them as items to be ticked once and for all at the level of system design. The Cohesive Tetrad is not a checklist. It is an architecture for truth governance that maps how normative sources, reasoning structures, lived experience, spiritual depth, and moral character interact over time. In this architecture, AI systems, institutions, and legal frameworks are evaluated not only by compliance with formal criteria, but by how they align with Sabda, protect the Qualia of the weak, are purified through Mistika, and leave long term traces of Akhlak that can be audited.

5. Can The Cohesive Tetrad be used in secular or plural legal systems

Yes. The framework recognises that contemporary legal and political orders are plural and that citizens differ in how they name or receive Sabda. It does not demand that one religious

vocabulary dominate public law. Instead, it insists that every legal order already rests on substantive assumptions about dignity, obligation, and the good life. The Cohesive Tetrad invites those assumptions to be made explicit and critically examined, rather than hidden behind claims of neutrality. In practice, this means protecting a public space where different articulations of Sabda can speak, argue, and shape law under common commitments to human dignity and accountability.

6. Can non believers or agnostics meaningfully engage this framework

They can. The treatise does not require readers to confess a particular creed. It does, however, require honesty about the fact that some things are treated as inviolable in practice, even when they are not derived from calculation or majority preference. Readers who do not use explicitly theological language can still work within the architecture, for example by speaking of basic human worth, ultimate concern, or moral law, as long as they accept that human dignity and telos are not fully captured by technical or contractual reasoning.

7. What kind of further work does Treatise 1 invite

Treatise 1 is not a closed system. It invites further work at several levels. Legal scholars and practitioners can use the architecture to evaluate specific statutes, court decisions, and regulatory regimes. Policymakers can use it to re examine programmes and budgets that rely heavily on data driven classifications. AI researchers and engineers can use it to think about alignment, not only at the level of technical safety, but at the level of dignity, telos, and Akhlak. Philosophers, theologians, and social scientists can probe and refine each pillar and their relations. The text is offered as a starting point, open to correction and deepening.

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Glossary

This glossary provides brief explanations of key terms as they are used in Treatise 1. The full canonical formulations are given in the document **The Cohesive Tetrad Canonical Semantic Definitions: Sabda, Logika, Qualia, Mistika, Akhlak** and its Indonesian counterpart.

The Cohesive Tetrad

An epistemic and ethical framework for truth governance under minimal human dignity axioms, articulated in the canonical book *The Cohesive Tetrad: Jalan Menuju Kebenaran* (DOI: 10.17605/OSF.IO/D5S7V). It proposes an epistemic monism whose task is not to erase the plurality of sciences and traditions, but to reorder them around truth that guides human beings toward a right telos and protects the dignity of every person, especially the weakest, through four interlocking languages of truth and the surface of Akhlak.

Sabda

Revelatory Word, the authoritative source of norm and telos. Sabda names a mode of address that calls, commands, and orients persons and communities, and that is recognised as a higher source of authority than mere preference, convention, or calculation. In this framework, Sabda stands at the apex of truth governance and provides the horizon within which all other forms of reasoning and evidence are evaluated.

Logic

The ordered use of concepts, definitions, and inferences that guards coherence between premises and conclusions. Logic disciplines reasoning so that claims are intelligible, consistent, and accountable to standards of validity and soundness. In The Cohesive Tetrad, Logic serves Sabda by clarifying meanings and testing arguments, while refusing the temptation to install itself as the ultimate source of norm and telos.

Qualia

The lived, first person dimension of experience, the "what it is like" of undergoing a particular state or condition. Qualia in this framework include how laws, policies, and technologies are felt by those who live under them, especially the vulnerable. They register experiences of recognition or humiliation, safety or exposure, trust or suspicion, and thus expose whether regimes of truth governance honour or damage human dignity.

Mistika

Mistika, the intentional-spiritual dimension of journeying toward direct encounter with the transcendent. Mistika refers to disciplined efforts to purify intention, to align inner life with the truth one confesses, and to live before the gaze of the transcendent in honesty and humility. It protects the architecture of truth governance from becoming merely external or technical, and its fruits are tested by their coherence with Sabda, their openness to rational and empirical correction, and their long term Akhlak.

Akhlak

A relatively stable configuration of moral dispositions and habits that links inner orientation and outward conduct. Akhlak concerns the character of persons and institutions, visible in patterns of honesty, justice, mercy, courage, and care for the weak. In The Cohesive Tetrad, Akhlak is the observable surface on which Sabda, Logic, Qualia, and Mistika leave their traces, and it is therefore a key site for verification and audit.

Truth governance

The ensemble of practices, institutions, and criteria by which societies decide what is to count as true, who is authorised to speak, and how decisions based on truth claims are justified, revised, and held accountable. Truth governance includes legal procedures, scientific protocols, media ecosystems, educational systems, and everyday norms of testimony and trust.

Intention-Trace Alignment

Intention-Trace Alignment, the degree of alignment between epistemic intention and epistemic moral trace. It asks whether what agents and institutions claim to seek in matters of truth is borne out by their long term decisions, omissions, and effects on real lives. It is a diagnostic lens for exposing hypocrisy, drift, or corruption in truth governance.

Public reason

The mode of reasoning through which laws and policies are justified in terms that are meant to be accessible to all members of a political community. Many contemporary accounts of public reason tend to exclude explicit references to Sabda. The Cohesive Tetrad invites a more honest acknowledgement of the normative sources that already shape what is considered reasonable in public.

Sabda logic

The ordered relation between Sabda and Logic in which Logic clarifies and disciplines reasoning while remaining under the horizon of Sabda as the authoritative source of norm and telos. Sabda logic refuses both the marginalisation of Sabda and the absolutisation of pure logic. It is the central concern of Treatise 1 as an architecture for truth governance in law and the age of data.

SALOQUM Treatises

The SALOQUM Treatises are the first four treatises in the Cohesive Tetrad Treatise Series, namely Treatise 1 on the Logic of Sabda, Treatise 2 on the Language of Logic, Treatise 3 on the Logic of Qualia, and Treatise 4 on the Logic of Mistika. They develop Sabda, Logic, Qualia, and Mistika as four inseparable languages of truth within a single architectural whole. The SALOQUM Treatises are intended to be read together, since each pillar corrects and completes the others, and their combined meaning is ultimately manifested in Akhlak, which is treated in Treatise 5.

Bibliography

The references below correspond to works that are explicitly used or closely engaged in the body of Treatise 1. They do not exhaust the wider research base of The Cohesive Tetrad. More detailed bibliographic work appears in the standalone articles and preprints that form the journal corpus of Treatise 1.

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This list is intentionally modest. It is offered to help readers locate some of the main interlocutors and to situate Treatise 1 within wider conversations on law, dignity, epistemic virtue, public reason, and data driven governance, while leaving room for further enrichment and correction as the research continues.

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